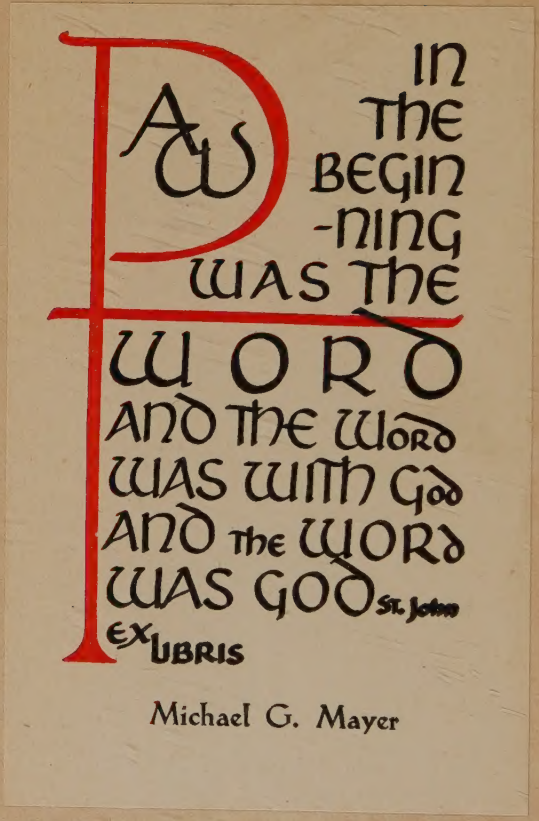
SOME LOOSE STONES

R. A. KNOX


IN THE BEGIN -NING WAS THE WORD AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD AND THE WORD WAS GOD St. John
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SOME LOOSE STONES

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BEING A CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN TENDENCIES IN MODERN THEOLOGY ILLUSTRATED BY REFERENCE TO THE BOOK CALLED

"FOUNDATIONS"

BY

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PREFACE

SILENCE, in print, is a virtue rarely found where theology is in question. But there comes a point at which, as with the fags watching the football-match in "Tom Brown," the worst-equipped onlooker becomes impatient, and must needs rush into the fray, at whatever peril of ridicule, in his shirt-sleeves.

This is not a theological book. I have no claim and no competence to write a theological book. It should rather be called a study in psychology. For we are never allowed to forget, nowadays, that psychology is the key to everything, more especially in matters of religion. We investigate the psychology of the Prophets, or of the Apostles, or of the Fathers, or of the Schoolmen, or of the Deists; and even (God forgive us) the psychology of Jesus of Nazareth. This book purports to open up new ground by investigating a far more intricate psychology—that of the modern theologian. The great argument used now against any theological proposition is not, that it is untrue, or unthinkable, or unedifying, or unscriptural, or unorthodox, but simply, that the modern mind cannot accept it. It is the modern mind that accepts this and rejects that, that expresses itself in terms of A rather than in terms of B, that thinks along these lines rather than along those,

that shrinks, or ratifies, or demands. And after reading a few paragraphs of such ostensibly psychological discussion, I find myself sorely tempted to exclaim, in an equally psychological spirit: "If the modern mind has really got all these peculiar kinks about it, then, in Heaven's name, let us trepan it."

The history of the present work is as follows. About two years ago I was privileged by an invitation to join a sort of Eranos, a body of eight Oxford Fellows who met in each others' rooms, on Fridays throughout the term, for Sext, luncheon, and None. It had included, I think, all, and still includes several, of the Seven Oxford Men who wrote "Foundations." I was aware of the imminence of that production; and long before its appearance set about writing a parody of Dryden's "Absalom and Achitophel" to greet its birth. The parody, which appeared in the "Oxford Magazine" almost immediately after the book itself had been published, laid itself open to two criticisms. Old-fashioned theologians, who were distressed at recent evidences of the trend of modern theology, asked why I couldn't attack the book in earnest. More "Liberal" thinkers were under the impression that there was something cowardly about a style of criticism which, after the manner of guerilla warfare, hid itself behind the rock of Satire and discharged irresponsible shots into the somewhat broad target presented to it. There is only one way of satisfying both criticisms, which was not then open to me, as I had not read "Foundations" itself; and that is to write a serious criticism of it.

But I repeat, it is in the first instance psychological, not theological. This description must not be taken to imply any truckling to Pragmatism, a philosophy

which all good men rightly reject. If a position is stated in cold logical form, clothed in words that represent the truth as nearly as a man can express it, then it is nonsense to enquire who the man is, what is his ancestry and station in life, or his views on other matters. Nobody wants a biography of Euclid. But "Foundations," in spite of the fact that it was launched on the world with something of the solemnity of a manifesto, does not seem to me a plain logical statement. Many of us would agree that he who teacheth ought to wait on his teaching, and he that exhorteth on his exhortation. But the teaching of "Foundations" is so interwoven with exhortation that the plain reader is likely to lose his way in it. The very language is largely unfamiliar to him. Words like "static," "corporate," "inclusive," "experience," above all, "restatement" recur continually, jarring upon the ear with the strangeness of a partially understood dialect, hypnotizing rather than enlightening us. We have to face a new vocabulary and a new atmosphere, wholly modern and largely "Oxford." And this book is an attempt to get behind that vocabulary, that atmosphere, and point out in language as simple as I can make it where this modern theology is carrying us, and why (in my thinking) it is hopelessly discontinuous with the tendencies of historic Christianity.

I am aware that the position I adopt is likely to be described as obscurantist. If obscurantism means a tendency to obscure things, that is, to conceal the importance of things which one knows to be true, then I cannot plead guilty to the charge; indeed, it seems that nowadays it is the "Liberal" thinker who

is far more tempted to practise economy in his representation of the truth. It is the Liberal who makes his appeal to the practical necessities of religion, rather than to abstract truth. He is content to reduce the deposit of faith to the smallest possible dimensions, in order to attract the largest possible number of converts. It is the "obscurantist," oddly enough, who goes up to the house-top, and speaks in the light that which he has heard in darkness; acquiring by his importunity some of the unpopularity which must attach to a theological *enfant terrible*.

But if obscurantism is simply to believe, that there are limits defined by authority, within which theorizing is unnecessary and speculation forbidden; that there are some religious principles of such a priori certainty, that any evidence which appears to conflict with them does not destroy them, as it would destroy a mere hypothesis, but by conflicting with them proves itself to have been erroneously or inadequately interpreted, then I would welcome the title, contenting myself with the remark, firstly that all of us, except the blankest agnostics, do in fact hold such a priori principles on certain questions, and secondly that if we did not religion could never be a practical thing, because a continual flux of first principles is (as a matter of observation) necessarily incompatible with any stable development of the spiritual life. I suppose therefore that the "obscurantist" is not one who takes things for granted, but one who takes too much for granted. I hope in the following pages to discuss the delimitation of that province.

But I should like here to enter a protest against

the assumption, very widely made, that the obscurantist, having fenced himself in behind his wall of prejudices, enjoys an uninterrupted and ignoble peace. It is, of course, in a sense true, that to them which have believed there is rest, even in this world. But there is another side to it. The soldier who has betaken himself to a fortress is thereby in a more secure position than the soldier who elects to fight in the open plain. He has ramparts to defend him. But he has, on the other hand, ramparts to defend. The soldier in the plain can retreat, if he takes care to retreat in good order, and take up a new line of defences behind that which he has abandoned. But the soldier in the fortress has let himself be surrounded; he has to defend every inch of his walls, since a single breach makes the whole stockade useless. For him there is no retreat: to be beaten back a step means loss absolute and irretrievable, the surrender of the flag.

The application of the parable to theology is easy. To have burnt your boats, to have nailed your colours to the mast, is not necessarily peace. The ring-wall of authoritative dogma lessens the fierceness of the attacks of doubt, but it also adds a fearful responsibility. The whole position stands or falls by the weakest parts in the defences: give up one article of the Nicene Creed, and the whole situation is lost; you go under, and the flag you loved is forfeit. You have not done with doubt because you have thrown yourself into the fortress; you are left to keep doubt continually at bay, with the cheerful assurance that if you fail, the whole of your religious life has been a ghastly mistake; you must set out again, under new colours. And this battle against doubt, though

it is not unceasing, has nevertheless a way of making itself felt when you would most fain be rid of it: it finds you out in moments of weakness and depression: it banishes your sleep when sleep is most needed: most importunely of all, it assails your meditation. People should be more careful when they say, "So-and-so has stopped thinking." What they mean is that he has stopped speculating about the Faith. That may be, but he has not stopped bothering about it (if I may use an expressive term), unless he has fallen into complete religious indifference.

One more protest must be made, by way of preliminary. There is a still harsher word commonly used by modern theologians than the word "obscurantist." I mean the word "bigot." Those who believe in certain doctrines because they are received doctrines, because they are handed down by authority, are often supposed to view with an unchristian hatred all such as disagree with them; while those who make their appeal (in the loose popular phrase) to "reason," are more broad-minded, have a better eye for the true points in their adversary's position, more sympathy for his difficulties. This may be so in some cases: I can only say that it is not so with myself. Faith is to me, not an intellectual process, but a divine gift, a special privilege. This being so, I have the utmost sympathy for those who are without it, just because I can give no clear explanation of how I came by it myself. And I can see the strong points in my adversary's position, just because if I, in my unworthiness, were not gifted with faith, they are precisely the points I should emphasize myself. The extraordinary thing to me is not, that there should be so much unbelief, but that anyone

should believe at all. I can feel every argument against the authenticity of the Gospels, because I know that if I approached them myself without faith, I should as likely as not brush them aside impatiently as one of a whole set of fables. It is rather reason that makes me bigoted. Believing by faith in the Resurrection, I can, I hope, have all patience with the unbeliever, because the thing itself is from his point of view so unlikely. But having arrived, by what I conceive to be a process of pure reasoning, at the conclusion that (let us say) the Ninth Book of the Iliad was written by the author of the first book, I find it very hard to have patience with the man who can read, and apparently follow, my argument, and then disagree with me. Him I do feel tempted to accuse of intellectual dishonesty, or invincible stupidity. "I would have sent Wolf to the stake," I assure myself, "but not Darwin."

With these caveats I enter at once on the task I have set myself, without apology for its manifest effrontery. I will only pray, that if there is any word in this book calculated to give offence to any person unnecessarily, or any word contrary to the defined truths of our most holy Religion, it may be blotted out from the minds of all who read it, and from my record too, when the judgment is set, and the books are opened.

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JONES AT THE CROSS-ROADS

Omission in the present work of certain points of view in "Foundations" explained—Possible criticisms of the present work as being either too aridly logical, or too egotistic—its egotism due to the necessity for psychological treatment of differences between traditional and modern theology—modernism a matter of temperament—and therefore liable to suffer before long from a reaction—Jones is not asked to turn to the right hand or to the left, but to go on, to hold fast the dogmatic traditions of the nursery—Some considerations on the nature of roads, English and Continental—A word for the clergy; necessity of meditation on the mysteries of the faith, if the imagination is to be convinced of them—this more important than any intellectual process, because the intellect, like all other issues except the moral issue, is only a side-issue in the working out of our salvation 212–219

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SOME LOOSE STONES

CHAPTER I

HOW MUCH WILL JONES SWALLOW?

"THE Christian religion," so Mr. Talbot assures us in the introductory chapter of the work we are considering, "could never have brought salvation had there not been a situation for men to be saved from." It may seem captious to observe, that in ordinary old-fashioned Christian theology our religion is said to save us, not from a situation, but from sin. "Being then made free from the Situation." . . . "You, being dead in your Situation." . . . "Where remission of these is, there is no more offering for the Situation" . . . it hardly rings familiar. But there is ground for emphasizing the point. If by the situation we mean the general atmosphere in art, politics, and science; the problems that call for solution, the questionings that most occupy men's minds: then I think it is true to say that the Christian revelation came into the world at a time when there was a situation, and did not save people from it; or rather, it saved them only by carrying them out of and beyond it. It came at a time when the armies of the world were continually on the verge of mutiny, and all it had to say was, "Be

content with your wages." It came at a time when slaves suffered revolting ill-treatment, and said, "Servants, obey your masters." It came when problems of Imperial Government and national sentiment were very much in the air, nowhere more so than in Palestine, and gave the oracular advice, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." The salvation it brought was altogether on a different level: it insisted, with obstinate irrelevancy, on the good fight of faith with its crown of life, on the glorious liberty of the sons of God, on a citizenship in Heaven.

And if it is true to say that the present aspect of politics constitutes a very grave feature in the modern situation, now that the comfortable optimism of the Manchester School has died out, and a strong passion for social justice has set in, though the effect of this may be to make us feel nervous, and give us the impression that we live in stirring and changeful times, it is by no means clear that such considerations are relevant to the position of modern theology, or the need for its restatement. There is presumably no more burning question at the present moment than that of Woman Suffrage. The issue here goes far deeper than ordinary political issues, since it depends on the eternal differences between man and woman, instead of the highly artificial and almost negligible difference between modern Liberals and modern Conservatives. But the Christian Religion, which tells us that in Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, also enjoins upon wives the duty of obeying their husbands in strong terms, not always palatable to the moderns. There is and can be no clear "Christian" view of the

matter. Christianity can save individuals from the situation, because it can show them that there is a centre for their lives above and beyond the problems, even the most burning problems, of the day. But this hardly commends it to the "modern mind" in general. It is not the faults, but the virtues of the Christian Church which make it unpopular. For it makes people happy without being free. This gulf can never be bridged by any theological accommodation. And there is a corresponding gulf which makes it difficult for Christianity to live side by side with progressive movements, for they make people generously enthusiastic without being pious. Christianity and modern democracy may be at truce in a more or less degree, but the difference of outlook is inevitable, because the one must have its chief interest centred in the next life, the other in this.

If the modern mind is really progressive in politics, it will necessarily be, so far, out of touch with Christianity, and not with Christianity only, but with religion as such, from the mere force of its impatience of other-worldliness. But, apart from this estrangement, is it true that modern political thought exercises any direct influence on the layman's view of theology? Unconsciously it does. For instance, we think of God as ruling the world, and when we find him "so careless of the type," creating a million species and only one of them with a soul, creating men by thousands and saving them only by hundreds, it offends a certain sense of economy which we imbibe largely from municipal electioneering pamphlets. And again, the very idea of God as a *monarchical* Ruler is, as I think "Foundations" points out, less familiar to us because we are not accustomed to

absolute monarchies, and tend to look upon the source of political authority as coming from below, not from above. And we are inclined to look askance at Divine "punishments," because modern legislators, more than their predecessors, are influenced by a humanitarianism which is anxious rather to see that order is kept, than to ensure that Justice is done.

But if we look at all closely at these quasi-political modifications of our outlook on the Divine Government of the world, we shall see at once that this is rather a defect in our imagination, than an indictment of our traditional theological vocabulary. We naturally resent (at least, I naturally resent) the untidiness of Creation, the profusion of natural objects of which we cannot see the spiritual purpose: "Le bon Dieu, pourquoi fait-il tant de mouches?" The stars seem unnecessarily numerous and complicated. The process of Evolution seems a clumsy process, as if the Creator could not design the world beforehand, like an architect, but must needs learn his business by successive failures, like an artist flinging away unfinished studies, and scraping out in a moment the work of days. I believe that this sort of feeling, however little recognized in apologetic, is one that makes Christianity seem grotesque to many ordinary people of our day: for we are all coming to worship efficiency, instead of magnificence, and the wastefulness of the evolutionary process, which would have appealed to the contemporaries of Louis XIV, is repellent to the contemporaries of Mr. Sidney Webb. But surely this is mere lack of imagination, based on an anthropomorphism no less complete than that which asks, "whether God

doesn't find it dull." Obviously, economy is relative only to a limitation of resources: and there is no argument *in reason* for its observance where resources are limitless. But the *imagination* is staggered. The first need of the modern mind is to learn how to train its imagination.

The same is true of all that body of Christian metaphor which is drawn from the language of the Court. To think of God as a King, of his Saints and Angels as Courtiers, and of mankind as his tributary subjects, is not natural to an age which is, superficially at any rate, democratic. Mr. Moberly, in "Foundations," tells us that God's relation to men "is more fitly symbolized by the relation of Father and child than by the relation of Sovereign and subject." Here, one might be tempted to suppose, is a case where Christian ideas can be restated in order to meet the needs of the present day. But if this is so, it is due only to a certain looseness of thought. Historically, the connotations of the word "father" are distinctly more autocratic than those of "king." The powers of the Father over the liberty and even the life of his son which were summed up in the "patria potestas" of ancient Rome recall the most barbarous forms of despotism. "Your Father which is in Heaven" is a phrase which doubtless suggested to those who heard it much of the loving care with which our Lord himself associated it. But it must also have suggested to them a conception of paternal *authority* which the modern theologian is apt to forget. For he (the modern theologian) is probably writing at a time of life when we have none but grateful and tender recollection of the hand that won us our daily bread, the fore-

thought that guided our early education. But when a man is actually under tutelage, the associations of the word "father," even to-day, are by no means unmixed. It has memories, most probably, of painful interviews on the subject of outstanding debts, late hours, or unsatisfactory work. It is not entirely insignificant, that youthful slang still designates a father by the name of "the guv'nor"—it was precisely this idea of despotic control that we were trying to avoid. And just as the duty owed to a Sovereign is an idea nowadays unfashionable, so there are signs of a revolt against the duty owed by a son to a father. Mr. Bernard Shaw has never written anything more subversive than "You Never Can Tell," for in that play, although it is classed among Plays Pleasant, he holds up to ridicule the most primitive and the most sacred of all forms of authority.

Thus our attempt at restatement breaks down. For, if we empty the term "father" of any of its full connotation, we shall be losing sight of a most important and salutary truth about the divine Personality. And if we keep the full connotation, the term will be hardly less offensive to distinctively "modern" ears than the term "king." Again it is a lack of imagination that creates the presumption against our Christian vocabulary. "What right has the King to rule?" is a question that may be asked of a fallible human monarch, elevated to his situation by accident of birth. But if you posit the existence of God, the question in respect of him becomes meaningless. We have ceased to believe in the Divine Right of kings; but it is meaningless to disbelieve in the Divine Right of God. Similarly,

the cry of the hero of modern drama is: "What right had my father to bring me into the world for his own pleasure?" But if you posit the existence of God, his pleasure becomes the supreme, the only ultimate end of anything whatsoever. We distrust human fathers, because they so often do not know what is best for their children. But if God does not know what is best for us, who does? or how can there be any best? We cannot restate the idea of the absolute authority of God in terms of our own generation (unless possibly by reference to the title of the Divine Physician). What can we do, but keep on the old terminology, assuring the sons of the new world that if it has lost its meaning in the earthly sphere, it can never lose it in the heavenly? Again we must appeal for the wider use of the imagination.

With the humanitarian difficulty we shall have to deal at more length over the question of the Atonement, so it need not be discussed here. What I have tried to show so far is that although certain ways of thinking about God may be based on ideals which have now become unfamiliar to us, through alterations in our political outlook, no intellectual restatement will meet the difficulty: that the offence they may cause to our generation is an offence to the imagination only, and we should therefore cling to the old terms and ideas to express our meaning, even though we have to reinvest them with a historical interpretation before they mean anything at all to us.

If politics, then, are irrelevant to the intellectual issue, what do we mean by the modern situation? Well, of course it is true to say that we have become

less confident through the advance of science. We connect the decline of faith with such phrases as "the uniformity of nature," "the historical method," "the modification introduced by Pragmatism into our conceptions of Absolute truth." And yet it may be doubted whether any of these features are specifically modern: certainly they are all discernible in the eighteenth century. No one could attack philosophic dogmatism more powerfully than Hume. Gibbon applied to Christianity in the most searching way possible the treatment known as the historical method. And the Deists against whom Butler argued had all our conviction, if not more than our conviction, of the uniformity of nature. Even Darwin did not really alter the status of orthodox theology, for if we had not, in the eighteenth century, realized that Man developed from an apparently soulless thing, the monkey, we all knew that every man develops from what appears to be an equally soulless thing, the baby.* Surely the critical point about the present situation is not so much the intensive development of scientific research, as the extension of the knowledge of scientific conclusions. What daunts us is not the effect of science on our own faith, but its effect on the faith of other people. What we have now, which we had not before, is a large number of eminently respectable people who, for one reason or another, declare themselves unable to accept the Christian Revelation. In modern

* It is perhaps worth while to observe that orthodox theologians usually have held that the soul is implanted from without in each member of the human race; and therefore the notion, that the soul was at a particular moment in history implanted in a beast, was not a shock to orthodox theology, but only to that loose doctrine known as Traducianism, which maintained that the soul, like the faculties of the body, was handed on from father to son.

doubt it is not so much our own beliefs we worry about, as those of the man next door.

That is why modern theology is all at heart apologetic ; that is why it shows, at times, such a cynical indifference to abstract truth. For we are not concerned, now, to find how we can represent truth most adequately, but how we can represent it most palatably. We ask of a doctrine, not, " Is it sound ? ", but, " Couldn't we possibly manage to do without it ? " ; not, " Is it true ? ", but, " Can I induce Jones to see it in that light ? " Jones is a banker in a provincial town ; he has been at the University, and formed a taste for serious reading which he has not lost in the midst of worldly employments. His father was a colonel who went to church once a Sunday, to Communion three times a year, and never worried his head about books. His mother was a godly woman, vaguely affected by the Oxford Movement. As the result of a surfeit of Baasha at his public school, and an overdose of Hegel at College, his religious ideas have arrived at a stage quite beyond his power to express : a stage in which he never thinks much of going to church, except now and then to hear a brainy Minor Canon discoursing (with frequent reference to Browning) on the Problem of Pain. His local vicar, one or two old College friends, and a diocesan bishop who has formed the hazy impression that this is the sort of man we want to take orders, ask him out to luncheon at intervals, with the double idea that they are doing him good, and keeping themselves broad-minded by cultivating the acquaintance of an intelligent agnostic. " Such a good man," they all declare, " *anima naturaliter Christiana,* and all that." And the problem arises in

each of their minds : How can we so dock and dovetail the faith, so leave out of sight its unfortunate insistence on miracle, so reinterpret its crude statement of the Atonement, so retranslate its antiquated formularies, that Jones can honestly become a communicant ?

Jones is the hero of " Foundations," all the way through. It is Jones who cannot get on with the story of Jael and Sisera : Jones who cannot be satisfied with the evidence which satisfied the Apostles : Jones who has difficulties about the morality of the Atonement : Jones who resents the " hateful cleavages and slow-moving machinery " of the Church : Jones who has discarded the infallible Church together with the infallible Bible ; and when Mr. Blatchford is condemned for arrogance in writing about " What I can and what I cannot believe," he might have saved himself by the correction, " What Jones can or cannot believe." Viewed from one angle, the whole book appears to be an attempt to reach, not a fixed deposit of truth, but an irreducible minimum of truth which will just be " inclusive " of Jones. For example, it is quite clear to any reader that Mr. Streeter's views on the Resurrection are not shared by his colleagues ; to one who reads between the lines, a very large number of other disagreements may be traced between the members of this theological Junta. Now, it would be absurd to say that in collaborating in the book, all the contributors bound themselves to Mr. Streeter's view of the Resurrection. But it does seem fair to say that in collaborating with him, they were declaring their adherence to the proposition that such views are tolerable as an interpretation of our Religion.

And in deliberately assigning to that contributor the treatment of that subject, they made it pretty clear that they were determined to make the wall as low as possible at that particular angle of the defences, in order that it might be accessible to Jones.

They approach the Man in the Street, I think we may say, in an accommodating frame of mind. And —although it includes, so far as I can see, no direct statement one way or the other—it does seem to be the burden of the chapter on " The Modern Situation " that the modern mind demands *concessions* from us. Without any facile cries of " Treachery " or " Sophistry," we may content ourselves with asking, Is it really concession the modern mind wants ? The *really* modern mind ? Lest haply we be found to be engaged in an attempt to convert our great-uncles. For it is the chief objection to be urged against the initial chapter of " Foundations," that it is not modern enough. The so-called modern situation is precisely that which theology found itself faced with at the time of " Lux Mundi," almost exactly the same as that which faced Jones when he matriculated, nearly forty years ago. Is it not possible that the situation itself has altered since then ? Materialism, for example, is still a popular doctrine among the less comfortable classes of the community, but they are not, with few exceptions, the people who buy ten-and-sixpenny theological works : is materialism still the enemy ?

In a word, our objection is, not that Jones is unreal, or unimportant, or unrepresentative, but that he is sixty. And some of us are beginning to think more about the second Mrs. Jones, who is a Christian Scientist, and the elder Miss Jones, who satisfies

her devotional needs by dabbling in spiritualism, and the younger Miss Jones, who has made her submission to Rome rather unexpectedly, with some clucking from the spinsters of the elder line, and Jones junior, who is in business in London, wondering whether to become a High Churchman or a Post-Impressionist. Is it not possible that we are entering upon an age of Positivism (not of course the Sect of that name, but a tendency of thought which demands above all something positive), upon a generation which will not have its theology watered down, but is resolute either totally to abstain, or to take it neat ?

There is indeed one indication in " Foundations " of a suspicion that it is itself not quite up-to-date. Mr. Moberly, in an able defence of religious Idealism, does apologize for not having dealt at all with Bergson. In a work less narrowly Oxonian, we might have expected the apology to be even more elaborate. But is the most recent development in theology more than a symptom of a *general* revolt from Materialism, which spreads far beyond the field of academic philosophy ? The chief fact which gives me ground for these doubts is the fact that in a very small experience, mostly by way of casual and not always very profound conversation, of the difficulties of really modern people, I cannot remember to have heard one to which any position advanced in " Foundations " would have provided any sort of an answer. " Why does God make men if he knows they are going to be lost ? ", " What does the Church of England say about babies who die unbaptized ? ", " Is Spiritualism from God, or from the Devil, or from neither ? ", " If Christ became perfect Man,

why didn't he sin ? ", " Why does a Fatherly Providence allow untimely death ? ", " How do people's souls get into them ? ", " What happens to prayers which aren't answered ? ", " Would an unbelieving witness of the Ascension have seen our Lord rise in the air ? "—those are instances of the questionings I mean, drawn from actual life : and whereas they are widely different, they seem to me to agree in this, that they all conceive of the Christian Revelation as a static body of truth, which ought to have an answer for everything. The doubter always seems to say, " Positing the truth of Christian theology, what becomes of a question like this ? " And they are not modern questions : they might all have been asked in the time of Saint Augustine. I have never met (outside of Senior Common Rooms) any demand from questioners for restatement or accommodation of my beliefs to theirs : they want rather to know what the Church does say, in order to see whether they can accommodate their beliefs to mine.

People of nominally Christian upbringing seem to tend more and more to look upon themselves as outside the Church, and approach theology *de novo*. Often they are in practice Church-goers, and indeed communicants, but they have an idea that the religious beliefs demanded at any rate of the clergy are something far more definite, and that there is an inner ring of Church-people who hold to Christian traditions, at whose position they cast wistful eyes in moments of serious reflection. These are not the professional doubters (if the term may be used without uncharity) who read up all the pros and cons of Christianity ; but people who would have accepted Christianity without any difficulty some years back,

and are now largely retentive of its practices, yet conscious of something fundamentally inadequate not about its, but about their own, theology.

And the symptom is not surprising, for Christianity is not, as it used to be, alone in the field : still less is the Church of England alone in the field. It is surely a matter of some misgiving, that " Foundations " pays no attention to the phenomena of Christian Science and Spiritualism and Occidental Buddhism, never contemplates Nietzschianism as a challenge to Christian morality, that it contains no article seriously envisaging the problems raised by the study of comparative religion. The question is now, not so much, " Can I believe ? ", but, " Which of all these various systems am I to believe ? " Christianity has to take its chance as a religion among the religions, and the Church of England as a sect among the sects. While theologians are trying desperately to reduce Christianity to those elements which it affirms in common with other religions, the really modern cry is to know wherein it differs from other religions ; on what recommendation it proposes to enter the lists against them. And, worst of all, when the enquirer goes to Church, to learn from the accredited teachers of our Religion what is expected of him, he finds in a hundred churches a hundred different standards upheld, till he begins to wonder what can possibly be made of a system whose apologists are so Protean.

And it is not as if, in " restating " our religion, we made it easier to understand. Christianity made easy is by no means Christianity made simple. The ordinary doctrine of the Atonement is a thing you can carry in your head. But if you adopt Mr. Moberly's

view of the Atonement, you would have to read the chapter over at the beginning of each Holy Week, to remember what it was all about. If we are to have a shop-window theology, a theology which we are to present to the waverer for his acceptance, it is before all things necessary that it should be lucid. Restatement in terms of modern thought might be taken to imply this; but whatever "Foundations" is, it is not lucid. The truths of theology, we shall be told, are too big to be cramped within the compass of ready-made phrases and one-sided doctrines. But then, orthodox theology (if I may be pardoned for a question-begging distinction) is not easily *intelligible*, for on the face of it it passes man's understanding. But however difficult it may be to *fathom*, it can be *stated* on a half-sheet of note-paper.

And indeed a theology which needs restatement once a century will be a very puzzling affair. Words are like coins, symbols of the exchange of human thought. To be continually restating your theology, is like continually crossing over a frontier, and having to get your money changed every time. This is not only confusing, but alarming, for the plain man naturally wants to make sure he has got value for his money, and he is a little inclined to suspect that his theological symbols will have suffered some depreciation in the changing, just as his honest English sovereigns do at Calais. Every sentence in "Foundations" has to be carefully examined from two different points of view; firstly, is this statement one that I can believe? and secondly, is it really the true equivalent of the traditional dogma it professes to enshrine? Against all this complicated process I am convinced that the cry of the average man is,

"Tell me what you do believe and always have believed—for really, if your doctrines are not the traditional doctrines of your Church, why should I worry about your Church?—and then I will see about it."

The average man—and *a fortiori*, I think, the average woman. Prophets with considerable claims to experience are assuring us, that we are only just beginning to feel the effect produced on women by the same causes which for the last half-century at least have promoted irreligion among men. We are only just entering on the revolt of Woman from the Church. She has been slow in evincing the tendency: for she clings more faithfully, as a rule, to her old loyalties, and is slow to catch at theory, from a tenderness for side-issues. But she is beginning to think independently: politically, she is just arriving at the Chartist stage; intellectually, she is awakening to the general religious unsettlement of last century, because that unsettlement has just begun to be reflected in fiction and light literature. ("Robert Elsmere" was too masculine for her.) And she is in quite a different position from her uncles and grandfathers, when their religious unsettlement began, for unlike them she has not mere agnosticism to fall back upon, but rival creeds, strong and arrogant in their modernity. Nor is it by any means the weakest or the most impressionable of that sex, rather some of the most brilliant and most determined, that the new religions are attracting. "Foundations" is always for discussing the difficulties of the modern man, as if the modern woman did not matter, because "Foundations" came from Oxford; we should, I fancy, have heard a different story from Cambridge.

And women demand, above all, clear and definite issues. Adam would have been content to go on being good without knowing why; it was Eve who insisted, to our undoing, on knowing the meaning of it. I do not say that women are interested in logical process, I should most strongly say that they are impatient of anything but logical statement. They do not mince words, or suspend judgment. Men become agnostics, but women become atheists. And we shall be loth to neglect the religious demands of womanhood, if we look back at the extent to which our own personal religion owed its origin to our mothers.

"Tell us what you want us to believe, and we will see about it." With full consciousness of the rashness of attempting to trace tendencies anywhere, I would still maintain that this is the modern demand. And it is not to be met by compromise. Most of us know the rather old-fashioned style of doctor, who in prescribing for an ailment will say, "H'm, let's see; d'ye smoke? Well, I dare say a little tobacco doesn't do you any harm. Drink? Well, I don't see why you shouldn't drink, as long as it's in moderation. Not fond of medicines, eh? No, I don't see why you need take any medicines. You might take a little holiday from work, I think, and enjoy yourself a bit; and mind you aren't up after one." It is a very agreeable method of treatment, but the patient who is conscious of serious organic disturbance is not reassured by it. And it is, I believe, something of this lack of confidence that is created when the doubter of to-day lays his symptoms before a theologian, and is told: "Come, I don't think your case is really so hard. Not fond of the idea of Vicarious

Atonement? Very well then, we'll cross that out. Miracles don't agree with you? No; I expect Special Providences are more in your line. Difficulty about the Resurrection? Ah, I think we've got an edition of S. Mark that will just suit you." And so on. The modern mind does not want pulp. It wants something that it can close its teeth on.

And if this is true of our own countrymen, still nominally born into a Christian atmosphere, how much more must it apply to those who have not yet heard, or have heard only as from a distance, of the Christian Revelation. If the Christian faith really upholds the survival of personal immortality through all eternity, is it not essential that India should be assured of this as unmistakably as possible? On the other hand, might not any Indian rise from a survey of the chapter headed "God and the Absolute" without the vaguest idea whether the Christian faith asserts that doctrine or not? If Jesus was greater than Mahomet, would it not be well to inform Islam exactly how? And does not honesty demand that we should make it quite clear to the Christian Scientist, if we really still look upon sin as something more than a subjective attitude of the mind? The East may be, as we are often told, stretching out her hands for the Christian Gospel, let us at least make certain that she does not find it of a consistency like Creusa's phantom:

> Ter conatus ibi collo dare bracchia circum:
> Ter frustra comprensa manus effugit imago.

I am not arguing from an arrested development in theology; I do not propose to draw the line at "Lux Mundi" and cry Quits. I am pleading rather, that

our time needs a plain statement, instead of a modified statement: that theology must still be a complete system or body of dogma, such as a man can accept or reject in view of the opinion he has formed of the credentials on which the whole of it, as a whole, rests and has always rested; not a series of attractive propositions, attuned to the outlook and temper of a particular age. Perhaps in the implications of this book I shall be able to sketch out the kind of system I mean; meanwhile, we must examine in more detail the fare Jones is supposed to relish.

CHAPTER II

HYPOTHESIS AND THE CACODÆMON

"VERY well," says Adversarius, "let us take you at your word. Let us put the story of Uriah in the forefront of the battle; let Goliath be our protagonist; Jael with her hammer, and Samson with his jawbone, shall lead us to victory; we will stand or fall with the walls of Jericho, we will lash Jonah to the mast." I must protest, that this is not at all my meaning. I do not want to choose, as the battle-ground of the Christian Religion, the morality of Jael or David, the credibility of Judges, or the edibility of Jonah. No one wants to make such questions as these a matter of faith, partly because they have not been defined by any authority, partly because (what is very much the same thing) they are not in any way central or vital matters of revelation. There is no particular detail of the Old Testament, outside the story of the Fall, which has a direct bearing on the Christian Faith; and it is not, therefore, necessary to present the whole Bible point-blank at the aspirant towards membership of the Church, for his acceptance *in genere et in specie*. It would be irrelevant (though by no means impossible) to challenge any of the conclusions at which Old Testament criticism has arrived, for the purpose of our present argument. But if it is a question of the

method by which those conclusions are reached, of the half-conscious assumptions with which, nowadays, the study of the Bible is approached, there is a great deal more to be said. And in order to say it, it will perhaps be excusable to examine at some length the point of departure between ancient and modern theology, at the risk of going over ground which has already been traversed, and more particularly in the Bishop of Oxford's Bampton Lectures. The difference turns on the difference between hypothesis and presupposition; and these logical terms need some exegesis before they are applied to the matter in hand.

Suppose a friend of mine is accused of murder. The man from Scotland Yard is in possession of clues. The fact that my friend Smith was apparently the last person who saw the victim alive leads him to formulate the hypothesis that Smith was the murderer. He then applies the hypothesis to the facts: finds, for example, that Smith's movements were such as to make it possible that he was the murderer, finds that the traces were such as Smith might well have left: finds that there was some difference of opinion between the two which might have afforded, from the official point of view, adequate motive for the crime. He has now got Smith's neck in the noose on the strength of circumstantial evidence. But the evidence itself is not conclusive; it only *does not conflict* with the hypothesis that Smith did it; each of the facts individually might be explained on some other hypothesis, or series of hypotheses. And meanwhile, what have I to go upon? I can only say, that I know Smith did not do it. And this is not a hypothesis: it is not the result of experiments on Smith's character: it is not that his kindness to animals, or the fact

that he is on eminently good terms with his wife, has given me grounds for a perfect induction as to the gentleness of Smith's character. It is not that I know anything about Smith: it is simply that I know Smith. And in virtue of that peculiar certainty, which we feel about people we are well acquainted with, I am in a position to say that Smith did not do it, though I have no precise proof, such as would satisfy the man from Scotland Yard, to that effect. My confidence in my friend is a thing which (so at least I tell myself) would not be shaken by the most apparently damning chain of circumstantial evidence; yet my conviction, being entirely a priori, goes for little or nothing in a court of law.

Of course one can be mistaken in a friend: human character is not entirely to be depended upon: the human heart is not always a safe guide. The fact remains that my conviction, fallible as it is, is to me at the time a matter of direct certainty, and may therefore serve to illustrate, for our purposes, the difference between an a priori presupposition which we bring to the facts, and a hypothesis which we derive from the facts and verify by the facts. Is there any case in which such an a priori presupposition can be accepted, by people in general, as valid in its own right? Clearly there is, in the case of mathematics. That things which are equal to the same thing are equal to one another is not, and never could have been, a matter of observation, hypothesis, and experiment. At best we might have said that as far as we could tell, in all the observed instances in which A appeared to be equal to B, and B equal to C, so far as our most accurate instruments could gauge the facts, A wore all the

appearance of being equal to C. But the certainty with which we lay down the mathematical axiom is a far more direct certainty, an immediate delivery of our intellect. When we prove that the three angles of any triangle are equal to two right angles, we do not feel bound to measure all the triangles that have ever been drawn, still less all the triangles that might possibly be drawn: we conclude immediately, from the examination of a single instance, that it must be so. Are there then any axioms, any postulates, outside of Euclid, or can this direct certainty be attained only in the case of abstractions?

Mr. Brook (p. 59 of "Foundations") appears to suggest that the conviction we have of the Uniformity of Nature—every effect has a cause, and so on—is a hypothesis; that is, a principle that can be discovered by recourse to observation and experiment, the balance of probability remaining in favour of it. For the life of me I could never see this. If you start by treating the uniformity of nature as a hypothesis and no more, you will find your hypothesis upset by every recorded case of witches flying, tables turning, Saints being levitated, oracles coming true, horoscopes being verified, broken limbs being cured by faith-healing, and the like. It is no good to say that there may be some higher law under which such phenomena would come, for that is a *petitio principii;* it assumes that things do work by law, and you haven't found the law. It is no good to say that they are bogus statements of fact, for apart from your conviction of the uniformity of nature you have no ground whatever for supposing the evidence for them to be otherwise than fully adequate. And indeed, if the uniformity

of nature were a mere hypothesis, Science would be a nightmare ; for the principle is itself that on which all hypothesis must rest : you could not have such a thing as a hypothesis unless you believed, to start with, that things remain what they are and behave in a uniform manner. So far from being a hypothesis which we are attempting to verify, the doctrine of the uniformity of nature is an immediate and unconquerable conviction of the human mind : so strong, that any amount of apparently conflicting phenomena make no difference to us ; we say at once : " Either these facts have been misrepresented, or else the laws of nature are a more subtle affair than we took them to be ; however the case stands, we cannot but believe that all the events of nature are bound together by a strict chain of causality." Everyone in practice admits this fundamental a priori conviction : no one has ever done so more generally than the mediæval schoolmen. But it is a presupposition, not a hypothesis : we believe it, not because it makes sense, but because if we did not presuppose it, it would not be possible to talk about things making sense at all.

This, however, is for the logicians. The same question may be found in more strictly theological departments of speculation. Just as my reason refuses to believe that nature is inexplicable, that nothing is uniform ; so my whole incentive to action and character would be gone, if I did not believe that Good is ultimately the explanation of the world, and not evil ; that, whatever rewards or punishments may await me hereafter, there is that in the nature of Good which gives it its own credentials, and demands my homage. Is this a hypothesis ? If so, I

think we shall find it a particularly hard one to verify. Does Nature, red in tooth and claw, does the heart of man, ever prone to suggestions of evil, does the course of history, with its long record of arrested progress and thwarted effort, give any ground for saying, Our hypothesis is proved? True, we may find an explanation, in terms of probation, of the existence of evil side by side with good: but this is at best merely a proof that the hypothesis we cling to is a possible one: it does not in any way assert its necessity, or its superiority. Perhaps this point will best be made clear if we propose a rival hypothesis to dispute the field.

Suppose the world created by a Cacodæmon, a malevolent spirit who shows his true nature in the hurricane, the volcano, the thunder-bolt: who rejoices in the scream of the rabbit as its blood is sucked by the ferret, and is represented at his most characteristic by the cat which tortures the mouse, the lion which plays with its quivering victim. Suppose that premature death is really a grudging release; that we are only allowed to live in order to gratify the malignant spite of this being who keeps us ever under his thumb, ready to hurt us. That, in a supreme moment of creative activity, he produced Man, a being with a nervous system so complicated that the slightest twinge of pain, regret, or depression in him could afford exquisite pleasure to his infernal tormentor. Good, we have often been told, is the explanation of evil; if we had never experienced pain, we could never have experienced the blessedness of relief from pain; if our nature had not contained capabilities of evil, there would be nothing noble about our triumph over sin. But supposing it were

all the other way? Supposing pleasure were only given us, because without experiencing pleasure we could never have experienced the torments of regret; that the good in our nature is only put there, because without it our actions could not be called in the full sense evil? That the yell of the trampled wife is the ultimate explanation of our existence; her capacity for suffering and her husband's capacity for sinning being designed alike to provide sport for our Enemy? Does not this hypothesis equally cover the facts?

"But," the reader will object, "what can be the use of rushing off into these fantastical speculations, when you know perfectly well that nobody will accept them? Is it merely in order to show me that you are prepared to support, for the sake of argument, any position however preposterous? That will hardly enhance your reputation as a responsible author. Or are you simply trying to throw discredit on reason altogether? That may be useful to serve an immediate partisan end, but ultimately it means death to your system." Neither of these is the idea with which the Cacodæmon Hypothesis has been here advanced. It is, I quite admit, a fantastic speculation; but why? Not, surely, in so far as it is a hypothesis. It covers precisely the same facts as the orthodox hypothesis, and covers them equally well; only it explains good in terms of evil, not evil in terms of good. And yet it is perfectly intolerable: why? Only on account of an overmastering, but quite a priori conviction that the case is the other way about.*

* "If that there dratted Providence doesn't look out," as the farmer said, "there's One above as will have something to say to it."

Nor can we even appeal, in support of the hypothesis, to the *consensus orbis terrarum*. Plenty of honest thinkers are so bewildered by the patchwork of good and evil they see around them, as to refuse to adopt either hypothesis; they remain dualists. I have actually read a book by a spiritualist, in which it was stated as the author's conviction that the world was full of evil spirits, and contained very few good ones ; that there is no heaven, but that there is a hell, and we are (if I remember right) all going there. But without having recourse to such isolated views, we may appeal, as against the orthodox hypothesis, to the vast numbers of human beings who, under the influence of Oriental religions, assert the inherent depravity of matter, and uphold absorption as our only possible deliverance. The most fundamental Christian conception, that of the Providential government of the world, is not a proved hypothesis, but an a priori conviction, and one that is rejected, probably, by at least a third of the human race. What is the faculty which enables us to assert this conviction so cheerfully ? To the psychologist it is temperament ; in Christian language it can only be called Faith.

Nor is it only on the orthodox side, that a priori conviction plays its part. Disbelief in miracles is a hypothesis you might try to prove for a lifetime, as a hypothesis, and never get any further. Indeed, from the point of view of strict logic, it is a definitely wrong hypothesis. For we are taught that the hypothesis which is most satisfactory is that which accounts for the largest number of recorded facts. Take the two hypotheses, (1) Miracles never happen, (2) Miracles sometimes happen. This latter hypo-

thesis covers all the cases, innumerable quantities of them, in which no miracle is reported to have occurred, and also all the cases, hundreds of them, in which miracles have been reported. Whereas the non-miraculous hypothesis is in a definitely worse position; it explains the cases where miracle is absent equally well, but has to explain away the other cases, with Heaven knows how much impugning of documents, assigning of motives, postulating of coincidences, and the like. Again, the hypothesis breaks down; and it is only because certain gentlemen have got it into their heads, a priori, that miracles cannot happen, that they assert the proposition at all. To the psychologist it is temperament; in Christian language it is called unbelief.

Thus in approaching theology at all, everybody starts with one prepossession, that of the uniformity of nature: we may add another very presumptuous prepossession, that of the validity of reasoning. And all Westerns, or almost all, start with a further prepossession, that there is a Providence in the world. And a large number of critics start with the prepossession, that miracles do not happen. None of these positions are hypotheses susceptible of proof or disproof. And in defence of the very large number of people who have held, and still hold, that the Bible is literally and verbally inspired, we may say that all they have done is to add one more to the a priori presuppositions required (to replace the anti-miraculous presupposition which they have discarded), to this effect: "Just as I believe my reason, because without it life would have no meaning at all: just as I stick to my conviction of the superiority of good over evil, because without it I should not know

how to live; so I stick to my conviction that the Bible contains nothing which is, even formally, an untruth, because without it I could have no certain hope, which is the essence of my religion."

You may try to argue with a man like that, but I cannot see you have any ground to stand upon. If his position rested on a hypothesis, you could bring forward evidence to discredit the hypothesis, but since it is an immediate certainty, no amount of contrary evidence, short of ocular demonstration, would suffice to convince him. When the detective comes to me with his damning chain of evidence against Smith, I can reply: "I could never believe such a thing of Smith unless I saw him doing it with my own eyes. And your demonstration is not ocular demonstration: it is a hypothesis, and a hypothesis is in the last resort always precarious. You can confirm,but you cannot prove it." And so the devotee of literal inspiration can reasonably say: "I know; you are only guessing. Your glacial age, your Babylonian influence, your Elohists and Jehovists, all these are only hypotheses which cannot be disproved: they can never reach mathematical certainty."

What actually happens nowadays when such a position is maintained, is that theology describes such a person as one who has ceased to use his reason, as one who will not face facts, and passes him by. But this is only temper, not argument. What do we mean by not facing facts? Mr. Brook does not believe the whale could have swallowed Jonah, but Mr. Frank Bullen does; and he has not merely faced facts, he has faced whales. Nor has such a person ceased to use his reason; he has only lost interest in certain

hypotheses, because, from his point of view, they are merely frivolous hypotheses, like the hypothesis of the Cacodæmon. The believer in literal inspiration is no more worried if you ask him to prove his first principle, than Mr. Brook would be if I asked him to prove the Providential government of the world. And he can reason very acutely: only, since his first principles are fixed, he naturally reasons deductively. To say, as I suppose a critic might say, that because the story of Arion may have been based on some allegorical picture, therefore the story of Jonah was probably based on some allegorical picture, may be good reasoning enough: but it is no better reasoning than the following: "Every word of the Bible is literally true: these statements about Jonah are words of the Bible, therefore these statements are true." The difference is merely, that in the first case the reasoning is inductive, in the second deductive.

And here we arrive at the crux of the whole matter. For the Scholastic theology everywhere argues deductively, from first principles which need no proving; modern theology aspires at any rate to argue inductively, by means of hypothesis, upwards instead of downwards. There is no need to multiply instances; the antithesis of the two tendencies meets us at the very threshold of the Gospels. The modern theologian, finding without any prepossession in his mind that there are two accounts in two different Gospels of the genealogy of S. Joseph, comes to the very natural conclusion that one if not both must be fictitious. The Scholastic, admitting the same facts, but with the major premiss that every word of the Bible is literal truth, comes to the conclusion, less

natural but quite equally possible, that one account traces S. Joseph's descent through a literal, the other through an adoptive father. But there is nothing unreasonable, nothing illogical, in this; the difference is one of first principles, in the proof or disproof of which Reason itself is powerless. It is a difference, in fact, as I hinted in the Preface, which can only be treated psychologically.

Is the conviction of Biblical infallibility an immediate certainty, not susceptible of further analysis? The human mind, just as it is apt to miscall observation what is really inference, is always in danger of mistaking for immediate delivery of the intelligence what is really mediate, because the result of deduction. Is it not possible that the presupposition in question is the result of a deductive process, something as follows? God meant to reveal himself fully to me: but it would not be a full revelation, if he left anything to my fallible intellect: therefore his Revelation must in itself be infallible: but the Bible is his Revelation of himself, therefore the Bible is infallible. Now, with all tenderness for those who feel this process of reasoning to be valid (and deductive reasoning, if it is valid at all, is necessarily and inevitably true); is it not possible to suggest that the claim, so stated, is overstated? God has revealed himself in the Bible—that is to say, the self-revelation of God is contained in the Bible. Need we then press for more—I do not say, to satisfy our own spiritual needs, but to exact as a test of orthodoxy from others—than that the Bible, in so far as it is the self-revelation of God, that is to say, whenever and wherever it makes dogmatic statements on matters concerning the Faith, is infallible?

Of course, such a position will be immediately assailed from both sides. The literalist will urge, that it makes revelation uncertain by leaving it to us to decide, what is of faith and what is not: the modern will protest that this is precisely the principle he is advocating, that the test of orthodoxy so laid down could be subscribed to *ex animo* by all the authors of "Foundations."

Now, it is very tempting to suggest, that after all we are not so completely left in the dark; that God has given us a purely natural faculty, by which to discern such issues, and namely, common sense. Is it difficult to see, for example, that whereas the Flood left things precisely where they were before, if it really happened, the Fall, if it really happened, made a colossal difference to the whole scheme of Creation, the effects of which last on to our own day? As a matter of hypothesis, it is very difficult to see why we should not believe in the Flood: modern critics seem to discredit the story because it can be paralleled from Babylonian legend, and indeed from most quarters of the world; though why the fact that most quarters of the world have a similar story of a Flood, should be regarded as invalidating the evidence of Genesis, has always been a mystery to me: one would have thought it was corroborative. But, whereas a Man may refuse to accept the story of the Flood, and yet hold precisely the same views of Sin and Pain and grace as Saint Paul, Saint Augustine, or Saint Thomas Aquinas, it is surely doubtful whether he could hold these same views, without being able to give a satisfactory account of the story of the Fall.

But, inasmuch as he saw that at certain periods of

history common sense itself would vanish under the enervating influence of speculation, God did not leave us in the dark, but left his spirit with a Church, and thereby enabled that Body to determine, expressly, which Books they were that contained the Revelation, and implicitly, by the superstructure of dogma built upon it, which parts, or rather, which elements of the Bible, were matter of Revelation, and which were not. We all know that most early Fathers tended to take an extremely literalist view of the Scriptures, that they were followed in this by the Schoolmen, and that to this day the Vatican favours the tendency. But neither the early Fathers, nor the Schoolmen, nor even the modern Vatican, ever asserted, with the full parade of an œcumenical decision, the doctrine of literal inerrancy. "Because they took it for granted." Precisely: but just in proportion as they took it for granted, it is certain that they never really threshed the matter out. Had you asked them, they would have asserted the inerrancy of Scripture; but is it not possible that with them too the underlying presupposition which gave them this confidence was the assurance that Scripture could not be a fallible guide *in matters of faith?*

In a word, the ordinary "obscurantist" of to-day does not, whatever his opponents say of him, take the unexpounded Scripture as his sole guide. It is only at the points where Scripture and ecclesiastical tradition combine to form a defined doctrine, that he pretends to stand on sure ground, in virtue of a presupposition. You have a motor-car with two headlights, each throwing out its rays obliquely in either direction. The hedge on each side is illuminated by

one lamp only, but in the centre of the road the two lights converge, and mark out a triangular area of brilliant clearness. The two lights of Scripture and Tradition (if we may pursue this crude metaphor) may be said in the same way to provide sufficient guidance for our course only where they overlap. Beyond this area, speculation is at liberty to botanize in the hedgerows.

That, I should say, is the view of the vast majority of Anglican parish clergy at the present day. But if it is the view, it is certainly not the attitude, of the modern theologian. "You have given up a priori presupposition," he tells us, "with your belief in literal infallibility: why not come with us? Your traditional views shall be safeguarded and respected, all in good time, for what they are worth; but first we must apply the historical method to the evidence at our disposal." This is exactly the appeal we have to be frightened of. For it is true that modern, like ancient theology, takes into account both Scripture, and Tradition, and the reason of things. But in the old theology it is Scripture and Tradition which come first: and the presupposition thence derived is afterwards shown to be, not a cogent hypothesis, but a credible hypothesis, congruent with, but not dictated by, ordinary human reason. The modern theologian is in the first instance inductive, applying fearlessly to the Bible the critical principles he would apply to any other book; examining doctrines from the standpoint of the modern mind; and then, as an afterthought, proves that his results are substantially identical with received doctrine. It is an afterthought; the old basis of Scripture and Tradition is not consulted at once, but called in tardily, like Micaiah the

son of Imlah, to satisfy the untimely scruples of some orthodox Jehoshaphat.

You may give up the principle of Biblical inerrancy, without giving up the principle that religious truth is primarily to be found by a priori methods. Without swearing by Jonah, we may still hold that there are certain presuppositions, with which you must approach theology if you are to have any certainty of attaining the truth. Otherwise, we become the sport of hypotheses: we have to be reassured by a yearly statement from Dr. Sanday, comparable to the weather report, as to "What we may still believe." Nay, the case is worse, for if the weather is bad one can keep indoors. But we have sunk our all in Christianity: in reading these reports, we are in the position of a man with heavy investments scanning the fluctuations of the share-market. We shall find ourselves running hatless to buy the quarterly issue of the Journal of Theological Studies, like the speculator rushing for his evening paper. Most of us will still prefer to say, "Whatever hypothesis Germans may advance, verify, or refute, *this* at least is certain." Without this, to believe in Christianity would be like doing Euclid without postulating the axioms, or facing life with an open mind as to the possibility of the Cacodæmon.

Nor is it even that the content of theology fluctuates with the movements of criticism: to the unprejudiced eye, it even looks as if it diminished. Not in volume, Heaven knows, nor in complexity, but in intensity. People are inclined to pour cold water on what they describe as "the doctrine of the slippery slope." We should have more faith, they say, than

to suppose the deposit of truth will come out any less after successive plunges into the crucible of restatement: only the dross will go, the pure gold will shine all the brighter. But there is some doubt whether a glance over the history of theology since the appearance of "Lux Mundi" will seem so reassuring. It is even whispered, that the survivors of the "Lux Mundi" school have seen cause for searchings of heart in connexion with "Foundations." With each restatement, we are told, as by the watchmaker in his successive efforts to regulate our clocks, that this will be the last overhauling theology will need. At least, if this is what the authors of "Foundations" mean, we may point out that the decision is not in their hands, but in those of their descendants. And if they actually mean to tell us that this is not final, that sooner or later we shall have to go a bit further, the prospect is hardly comfortable. Surely what any ordinary person wants is a deposit of faith that shall, in its own right, be permanent: and this is only possible, if we find such a deposit by deduction from an a priori principle; for of the making of hypotheses and deductions from hypotheses, there is no end.

But against this a priori conviction, that God would not have sent his Son into the world unless to give us a perfectly definite and unflickering light to guide our feet, the modern theologian sets an a priori conviction of his own, which has no historical precedent, and seems to me at least arbitrary and unnatural. The conviction is, briefly put, that Man is not meant to have a complete ready-made Revelation from God: he is meant to work out his own theology, as he works out his own salvation. It is

a form of probation: just as we are left to make the best we can of a will with possibilities for evil, so we have to do the best we can with a mind capable of error. We have an intellectual struggle, side by side with the moral struggle: we can arrive at no final certainty, but only at a succession of working hypotheses, in the formulation of which lies part of our duty, and consequently our merit. It is, I suppose, with some such feeling as this that Mr. Rawlinson writes: "We have no more reason, a priori, to look for infallibility in the sphere of intellect, . . . than we have to look for impeccability in the sphere of conduct. . . . Just as we may believe, in spite of immoral popes and worldly bishops, nay, in spite of the sins which form the matter of our own daily confessions, that the heart of the Church . . . beats true to the moral ideals of her Divine Master; so we may believe, in spite of Robber Councils and Erastian Confessions, and the chaos of sects and parties in modern Christendom, that the Church has been, and is being, guided into an ever-deepening apprehension of divine truth."

Of course, one can easily point to several reasons why this parallel does not run on all fours. Nobody said that any individual member of the Church, as such, is infallible: and I do not see that Mr. Rawlinson has proved that the Church, as such, has ever been guilty of sin. The argument thus combines the fallacies of composition and division. Further, it is perfectly possible for one's heart to beat true to a moral ideal, when one's own conduct, through imperfection of the will, belies it: but it is hard to see how anyone could entertain an intellectual theory as true, and yet maintain positions contrary to it.

And I cannot see why, by parity of reasoning, the Church should be attaining an "ever-deepening" apprehension of divine truth, a process apparently dynamic, when our moral position is that of keeping "true" to ideals which were there all along. But this is perhaps a digression. What is to be said as to the main theory that the Christian has a duty of "thinking," in the sense of examining and re-examining his beliefs in the light of contemporary scholarship, and that this is a part of his probation in the world?

No one doubts that the Church was left to work out the implications of her Master's teaching. But that was a process of deduction: as when we deduce from the text "I will pray the Father, and he shall send you another Comforter" that there are three Persons in the Deity, and then deduce further, by comparison of other texts which assert the Unity of the divine Nature, that this Trinity is a Trinity in Unity. But this working out of implications, necessitated in the first instance by heresies, is a very different thing from modern theology. Would Christianity really have been a less perfect, a less admirable thing, if the Marcan hypothesis had never been formulated, and nobody had discussed the possibility of a dual authorship in the Acts?

In any case, the duty of "thinking" can hardly be a universal one, for the poor charcoal-burner has other things to do than to trace tendencies and postulate documents. It devolves only on the intellectual few. But it must be observed that if this duty is really parallel to the duty which attaches to the regulation of our conduct as Christians, it ought by

rights to be something quite different from the duty represented. For the moral duty of the Christian is to counteract his natural impulses, the impulses to steal and get drunk and lie and backbite: by parity of reasoning, then, his intellectual duty should be to resist the natural tendencies of his reason, and believe what he is told, not what comes natural to him, just as he is expected to do what he is told, not what comes natural to him. I am not sure there is not something to be said for such a position; doubt thus becomes an enemy which we have to resist to the face, if necessary by actually avoiding the occasions which might make us fall into doubt, as we avoid the occasions which make us fall into sin. But this, surely, is not what was meant.

"But," the argument may restate itself in the face of such cross-examination, "if we were given intellect at all, surely it was given us to use." The same might, I suppose, be said of our biceps: yet I never think myself the worse Christian for not doing Sandow exercises.* Is it not a simpler account of the matter to say that the intellect was given us, like our other natural gifts, susceptible of use or of abuse: that to call it *wicked* to refrain from using it in this or that direction is to beg the whole question of how it was meant to be used? This is not to say that it is wicked to use the intellect for purposes of speculation, but simply that you cannot prove any positive duty in connexion with it. For myself, I must confess

* It may perhaps be worth while to observe, that the spiritualist uses precisely the same argument: "You were endowed with these occult faculties: it is your duty to exploit them, till you have reached through them all the enlightenment and extension of experience they are capable of providing." But in this case at any rate not a few of us would shrink from the cogency of the argument.

that I find the moral struggle hard enough, and should hardly feel competent to face it at all if I were engaged at the same time in theological restatements, which made the very first principles of Christianity a matter of something less than positive conviction.

APPENDIX

ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL INFLUENCE OF HYPOTHESES

I CAN conceive an objection being raised to the argument of the foregoing chapter on some such grounds as these: "After all, what precisely is the difference between the two attitudes in approaching theology which you have been at such pains to distinguish? Is it not simply that in the one case you prove things first from Scripture and tradition, and then go on to show that the case, so stated, is a satisfactory hypothesis; in the other, you arrive, by unbiassed examination of the alleged facts, at a conclusion, which you then prove to be in accordance with Scripture and tradition? If we have sufficient faith to believe that (as you yourself would admit) traditional and rational theology must somehow in the long run be one and the same thing, does it really make so much difference which end we start at?" There is a plausibility about this argument, and indeed, it would necessarily be conclusive, if we had enough faith to say, not only that the Church must inevitably be guided into all truth, but also that the conscientious theologian, in virtue of his good intention, must inevitably be guided into the same truth. My own difficulty is not to feel assured that the traditional theology is rational, but to feel that the conclusions of modern theology are rational. There is, as it seems to me, a whole series of intellectual dangers which attach

to the habit of arguing from hypotheses, and it is therefore not because I am afraid of Reason, but because I am afraid of unreasonableness, on the part of the Critics, that I am disposed to insist on the traditional presuppositions being taken as the primary and the decisive standard of our belief.

These doubts as to the results of a posteriori argument have not been suggested by any detailed consideration of the deliveries of modern theological criticism, but rather from encountering, in the course of the exercise of my profession, the deliveries of modern criticism, arising from the same methods and largely from the same shores, on the subject of the classical authors. I do not so much mind the Germans applying the same critical methods to S. Mark which they apply to Homer; but I do object to their applying the same uncritical methods to S. Mark which they apply to Homer. The unbalanced attitude of mind which has grown up in Germany—and perhaps at certain of our own universities—as the result of the "thesis" system of examination, may be all very well in the case of classical authors, where error will not serve to disturb the consciences and shake the convictions of many; but it is another thing when it is brought to bear on the life-and-death problems of theological criticism.

And here steps in a very pestilent psychological influence. The lecturer who combats Kirchhoff, or exposes Ferrero, can do so without any imputation of narrow-mindedness. He has, in this instance, clearly no axe to grind. But if he be a Christian, and a fortiori if he be a clergyman, he *is* afraid of the imputation of narrow-mindedness if he takes up the same attitude towards Harnack or Spitta. When Mr. Cornford writes about Thucydides, Oxford historians cheerfully dispose of him in half a lecture, but when he writes about Christianity, Oxford theologians see cause for much searching of hearts and wagging of heads. But is there any reason

for this difference, except that we are all in such craven fear of being thought illiberal?

In this appendix, therefore, I propose to examine the most characteristic dangers to balanced sanity of judgment which arise from the mere mental elation of the critic at having found a hypothesis to work on. And the instances taken will not be purely Biblical, for it is well to insist that the misguided energies of the "historical method" apply with equal force in all departments of criticism, and are only more significant in regard to the Bible in so far as the Bible is more significant than other books.

In the first place, then, while it is quite true to say that a man is likely to be blinded in his judgment by approaching a subject with an a priori prepossession in his mind, it is no less true, as a matter of practical observation, that he can be blinded by approaching it with a hypothesis to defend. The facts themselves are liable to take on a new and sometimes very fantastic colour when viewed in this special light; but they do not look fantastic to the critic, with one eye always on the hypothesis he is proving. The Baconian theory may (for all I know) be a very good hypothesis. But if anyone has read Sir Edwin Durning-Lawrence's tract on the subject, he will see a very flagrant example of the tendency to which I am referring. The frontispiece to the first edition of Bacon's "De Augmentis Scientiarum" represents Bacon sitting with a large book open in front of him: a child dressed in rags is stepping as it were out of the book, and placing a foot on the beginning of the ascent of a hill, at the top of which stands a sort of temple. It is not clear from the picture whether the child is male or female: that the sex was deliberately meant to be equivocal seems highly doubtful. Bacon appears to be pushing the child forward up the ascent. Now, to the Baconian, who sees in everything connected with Bacon a secret indication of the fact that Bacon wrote

at times under an alias, the theory immediately suggests itself that the child is a sort of lay figure, a mask, which Bacon is putting forward in front of him as the supposed author of the book. The ingenuity of the argument blinded the critic, and blinds the reader at first sight, to very obvious considerations; e.g. what was the use of putting this device on one of the few works (for Bacon, according to this school of thought, was the Benson of his period) on which his own name actually appeared? And what is the hill, and why has it got a temple on it? Put the Baconian theory out of your head, and the whole thing falls into place at once; the work in question deals with the advance of knowledge, and the author, Bacon, by a very natural piece of symbolism, is represented as helping forward the child, ragged to express its want of previous education, on the ascent of study which leads to the temple of learning; the book itself is as it were a stepping-stone which gives it a start. I doubt if anyone, approaching the subject with a mind unbiassed by hypothesis, would ever dream of inventing such a fantastic account as that of Sir Edwin Durning-Lawrence to explain such an ordinary piece of parable.

And if hypothesis invests the facts which it examines with an extravagant light, it has also a most uncomfortable habit of suppressing altogether the facts which cannot, even by the greatest stretch of imagination, be so conceived. It is easy to trace both tendencies in the happy-go-lucky criticism to which the Gospels are nowadays subjected even by writers with some claim to orthodoxy. It is, for example, widely assumed that we may observe a growing tendency, more marked in SS. Matthew and Luke than in S. Mark, and still more marked in S. John, to hedge about our Lord's person with an atmosphere of mystery and Divinity, of which the account of the Virgin birth in the first chapter of S. Matthew and also in that of S. Luke is only a symptom. Now, if we wanted an *experimentum crucis* by which to test

this theory, I cannot conceive of any better than the passage recorded by all four Evangelists (Matt. 13. 55, Mark 6. 3, Luke 4. 22, John 6. 42) where our Lord's critics complain of the humble origin of One who dares to speak so presumptuously. We should expect, surely, on our hypothesis, that if the accounts differed at all, S. Mark, who has never heard of the Virgin birth, would represent them as saying, " Is not this the son of Joseph?", or " Is not this the son of Joseph and Mary ? ", while the later Gospels would soften it down, in view of their more elaborate theory of the circumstances, into, " Is not this the son of Mary ? " And that if S. Matthew, with S. Mark's Gospel before him, found the words recorded " Is not this the carpenter's son ? " he would change them, from motives of reverence, into the form " Is not this the carpenter ? "

" Well," says the reader, " and what is wrong with that ? Surely this is quite good reasoning." So it is ; excellent inductive reasoning. Only unfortunately when you come to look at the passage the facts are just the other way. It is S. Mark who says, " Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary ? " ; it is S. Matthew who says, " Is not this the carpenter's son ? ", S. Luke and S. John who say, " Is not this the son of Joseph ? " Of course, I need hardly say that critics, with the hypothesis of Progressive Reverence in their minds, have urged that " the carpenter " was changed to " the carpenter's son " for fear of attributing to our Lord a menial occupation ; and that " the son of Joseph " was thought a better title than " the son of Mary," because the latter seemed to suggest a slur on our Lord's descent. But is not this hopeless special pleading ? If the facts had happened to be the other way round, as I represented them above, would not every critic have leapt on it as decisive proof of the late date at which the story of the Virgin Birth became current ? Nay, is it not certain that if in fifty years' time the critics have come round to believe that

S. Mark is the latest Gospel (and this is a hypothesis for which any man of reasonable ingenuity could make out a decent case without much difficulty), they will urge this passage as one of the strongest points their case rests on? It is not the facts themselves that matter, when you are really on the trail of a hypothesis; it is all a matter of the hypothesis into which the facts have got to be made to fit.

This tyranny of the hypothesis over the mind of the scholar, which is a matter of psychology, not a thing that can be brought home to him by argument, becomes a far more dangerous tyranny when it becomes public property. For in popular works, even in England, hypotheses that have been current for some years are represented not as hypotheses, but as ascertained facts of modern scholarship. Instead of saying, "The most satisfactory account of the interrelation of the Gospels is to suppose that S. Mark wrote before S. Matthew and S. Luke," the popular critic says, "We now know," or, "Modern criticism has shown us," or some such phrase, "that S. Mark wrote before S. Matthew and S. Luke"; just as half a century ago people used to say they now knew, or that modern criticism had shown them, that the most faithful representation of the facts of our Lord's life were given by S. John. And the hypothesis, handed down at theological colleges as part of the deposit of Faith, takes so firm a root in people's minds that no book which does not start from the presupposition in question is regarded as a serious work; it is simply a piece of obscurantism, or a *tour de force*. The tyranny of the hypothesis is complete.

So complete, that when the very facts, by induction from which it was originally established, are shown to have been misconceived, by sheer force of habit the hypothesis itself continues to be assumed. And this is a very disconcerting fact; for induction is not a sort of scaffolding which is useful while the hypothesis is being

built up, and may afterwards be discarded; it is rather a series of piers on which the whole superstructure rests; if you take it away, the whole hypothesis crumbles and falls to the ground. Logically, that is: psychologically, the hypothesis has gained too secure an ascendancy over fallible minds to be thus easily disturbed. The whole of Homeric criticism is riddled with such logical defects. The view that the text of the Iliad was tampered with in very early times was based on the view that at the time of its composition writing was unknown; there could therefore be no standard copy of the text, and any rhapsode was free to interpolate his own additions in the text without fear of detection. Then it was found that monumental writing existed, and a fortiori other writing must have existed, at the time in question; there was therefore no longer any antecedent reason for supposing that the Iliad had no standard copy; but we have all got so accustomed to look for interpolations in Homer that we never give the matter a thought. Still worse, a very elaborate hypothesis was built up by Prof. Geddes on the view that certain books of the Iliad were early, Thessalian, and "Achillean"; and certain others late, Asiatic, and "Ulyssean" (possibly attributable to the author of the Odyssey). Modern criticism asserts that (for instance) Book 2, which he put in the latter class, belongs to the original strata of composition; while Book 8 (for instance), which Prof. Geddes hailed as Achillean, is now set aside without hesitation as a late addition. In fact, the whole supposition on which Prof. Geddes' division was based is now antiquated and discredited. Not so the theory; critics still write airily of the Achillean and Ulyssean books, without in the least apologizing for the fact that its fundamental principles are now falsified. The supports have given way and lie in ruins; the superstructure (so we are asked to believe) remains intact.

One might point to similar phenomena in Biblical

criticism. For instance, scholars had observed that certain parts of the Gospel revelation which were recorded by SS. Matthew and Luke were also recorded by S. Mark, and therefore, according to the prevailing theory, must have been copied from S. Mark. They had to get over the difficulty, that there were also numbers of incidents, or at any rate of sayings, recorded in SS. Matthew and Luke which found no place in S. Mark. They were at pains, therefore, to conjure up an entirely new document, for whose existence we have no sort of independent evidence, which went by the name of Q. The *raison d'être*, the τὶ ἦν εἶναι of Q was to contain those records which belonged to the first and third Gospels, but not to the second; the whole basis of the hypothesis rested on the silence of S. Mark. But latterly, emboldened by the acceptance of this theory, critics have observed Heaven knows what stylistic peculiarities on the part of Q, and having found these same peculiarities in certain parts of S. Mark, have proceeded to question whether after all S. Mark did not have Q before him when he wrote his Gospel. It would be hard to conceive a more deliberate outrage on the public intelligence. The Two-Document Hypothesis was pledged to the assertion that S. Matthew and S. Luke had access to a common source of information which was not Mark; all their common matter that was found in Mark was Marcan; all that was not found in Mark was Q. But if S. Mark really knew and used Q, then there can be no earthly evidence that either S. Matthew or S. Luke ever saw S. Mark's Gospel; the natural supposition is that there was a document (call it Q if you like), which was abridged by S. Mark for his own ends, and expanded by S. Matthew and S. Luke for theirs. But the Two-Document Hypothesis continues to flourish, completely oblivious of the new theory that has cut at the very roots of its being.

There is another fallacy to which the pursuit of hypotheses is apt to give rise, the fallacy of economy.

People will assume that, if you can find a principle which gives one adequate explanation of three different facts, it is more likely to correspond with the truth than three different principles which give adequate explanations of the same facts severally.* It is on behalf of logic, not of theology, that this protest is made. For if we could really take our stand on the economy of hypothesis, then the case for the miraculous would be absolutely irrefutable. Orthodox theology explains all the miracles recorded of our Saviour under one single hypothesis, that he was omnipotent God. But the enemy of miracle is forced to give a variety of different explanations; that the healing of the sick was faith-healing, the stilling of the storm coincidence, the feeding of the Five Thousand a misrepresented Sacrament, the withering of the Fig Tree a misrepresented parable, the raising of Lazarus a case of premature burial, and so on. Certainly it does seem odd that all these non-miraculous events should have combined to create a presumption of the miraculous; the mind shrinks from coincidence. But in abstract logic you can provide just as good an explanation by several complementary hypotheses, as by a single covering hypothesis. If a man is found murdered in a criminal part of London, and the plate in the room is found to have disappeared, the criminal making his escape by the window, it is perhaps only natural that the police should assign robbery as the motive of the crime. But it is equally probable that the murderer (who had no intent to steal) may have left the window open, and any passer-by—since most passers-by

* This is the old business of the plurality of causes, by which the incomplete logician assumes that since he got drunk one night on whisky-and-soda, the next night on brandy-and-soda, and the third on gin-and-soda, it is the soda, and not the alcoholic ingredients, which made him drunk. The single explanation, Soda, is more attractive than the three different explanations, whisky, brandy, and gin; and this owing to a sense of economy which is entirely psychological, and has no place in logic.

would be unscrupulous—may have gone in and robbed the room; this latter explanation is, so to speak, less tidy than the other, but no whit less plausible. And it is hard to be patient when a Biblical critic, arguing from the fact that the mention of speaking with tongues in S. Paul's writings always suggests, not speaking with foreign tongues, but giving utterance in an ecstatic sort of way to certain inarticulate sounds—a practice not unknown in our own day—asserts that the Apostles on the day of Pentecost were not really understood by the people to whom they preached; that this is a later embroidery of the facts; that the Parthians, Medes, and Elamites were not really surprised to hear them speak so that all the various nations could understand, but to hear them speak so that none of the various nations could understand. No doubt it is tidier to suppose that the effect on the audience made by speaking with tongues in the Church of Corinth was exactly the same as that made by speaking with tongues on the Day of Pentecost. But it is an equally good hypothesis to suppose that there were two different ways of doing it, one so that everybody could understand, and the other so that nobody could understand without an interpreter; and it is a better hypothesis, because it accounts for all the phenomena in each case, instead of having to explain them away in the one case in order to make it tally with the other.

The argument has been; not that we should distrust hypotheses because of their uncertainty, but that we should distrust them because of the certainty with which inconsiderate people hold them. Everybody knows that all hypotheses are in the last resort partial and insecure as a representation of truth; at the best, they cannot be positively proved, they can only escape refutation. This alone would give strong ground for doubting that the first principles of our faith were ever meant to rest on foundations so precarious. But it is not merely that

they are insecure avenues to truth; my complaint is that they contain definite provocation to error. And on the ground of this constant temptation, of which I am myself fully conscious, if I could not preach the Christian faith in its fullness on a basis of absolute a priori certainty, I would give up preaching it altogether.

CHAPTER III

MIRACLE

WHEN the ordinary person speaks of miracles (in a theological, not a metaphorical sense), he has no doubt whatever in his mind as to what he means; when he comes to analyse his conception, he finds it very difficult to assent to any definition of miracle, which does not leave room for equivocations and perversions of his meaning. In theological books he is always bewildered, because in their anxiety not to overstate the case they generally fail to state it at all. Perhaps in order to get clear as to the meaning of our terms it will be best to begin with a contrast, the contrast between what we call miracles, and what we call special providences.

There are certain coincidences (this is the only term which will not beg the question here) in the ordinary course of life which suggest to the untheological mind a "lucky accident," to the pious mind "an intervention of Providence." The doctor does just happen to be passing the door when the boy is taken ill—an hour's delay would have been fatal; the tree that is struck by lightning is one under which you were standing only a minute ago; Arius dies at the moment of his triumph; the Armada is routed by a storm; the fact that the sheriff's watch is two minutes slow makes it just possible for the

reprieve to arrive in time. Special providences of this kind really include (as Mr. Streeter very justly observes, p. 139 of "Foundations") the evidence for guidance in the lives of individuals, and cases of answer to prayer. In all such cases, if we approach them with a theological presupposition—sometimes also with a political or national presupposition, as in the instance of the Armada—the devout mind finds evidence for the providential ordering of the universe. The evidence, it is true, is psychological rather than logical, for if we approached the matter in the light of cold logic we should have to admit that the vast amount of negative instances, unanswered prayers, misguidances, and unfortunate coincidences—why should the doctor have been away, just when he was so badly wanted?—entirely refute the hypothesis, if it be a hypothesis, of any beneficence in the order of nature. But in the positive instances at least, we Christians claim to see the finger of God. On the other hand, they contain no reversal of the order of nature; the doctor was just going out for a walk, not wafted to the door by an angel; the storm that dispersed the Armada was an ordinary storm, not a bolt from the blue. We are at liberty to say, This is the Lord's doing, and it is *marvellous* in our eyes—the verse occurs in our Thanksgiving for a Victory at Sea—but we mean by marvellous only a marvellous conjunction of circumstances, not any circumstance marvellous in itself.

But when "Foundations" observes, on p. 167, that a miracle is best defined if we say it is something which compels us to say, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes," the definition is surely vitiated by being too wide. For in common

parlance the word "miracle" is not co-extensive with the phrase "special providence"; nor indeed do the two even overlap. A special providence consists in the turning of the ordinary laws of nature to our good. A miracle is something which, for good or evil, contradicts the normal order of nature, so far at least as we have hitherto formulated it. A special providence is one of those rare cases, when we can see *why* things happened as they did. A miracle is one of those rarer cases where we not merely cannot see, but cannot even (humanly) conceive *how* things happened as they did. To confuse the two may serve the ends of theology, but at the same time it defeats the end of language, which is to keep things distinct. A thing may be "marvellous," without in the least beginning to be "miraculous" in any strict sense of the word. Raphael's Madonnas are marvellous, so are aeroplanes; but it is only by an avowed metaphor that we can talk of the former as artistic miracles, or the latter as miracles of modern science. You cannot define the word "miracle" by reference to its etymology, for like most words it has acquired a specific sense beyond the meaning given to it by its derivation.

A miracle in strictness is just that which traverses the law of the uniformity of nature. We may regard a thing as a miracle, which subsequently proves to be governed by a newly discovered law of nature; but when this happens we no longer call it a miracle. By the law of the uniformity of nature we mean that all events are co-ordinated by strict chains of cause and effect; by an effect, we mean that which is not merely the sequel, but the dependent and determined sequel, of a cause. To the materialist this is an

adequate account of our experience ; the philosopher sees something more than blind causation in the world, and rightly so ; he knows that a cause determines but does not create, being only the co-efficient of a spiritual something which can create. By spiritual, he really means personal ; for all this talk of " forces " reveals while it tries to conceal a reference to personality. Let us take the matter a little further back.

The materialist talks about things being governed by laws, hoping thereby to escape from the notion of a Creator. He neglects to observe, that " law " is a metaphor drawn from human Society. In our loose way of talking, we are ready to say " the Law compels me to do this," "the Law forbids me to do that." But this hypostatization of the Law is only popular. A moment's reflection will show us that we mean, " The State, expressing its will in the form of laws, commands this and forbids that." Everywhere in human Society the coercive power is not in the law, but in something which enacts the law; so, for the matter of that, is the moral inspiration. And if there is any meaning in talking of the laws of nature, it must be that the laws are merely the expression of the will of Something behind the laws themselves. Something which has the coercive power, and the moral inspiration, if there is any. The State corrects its own laws by what is known as " equity " : it is in complete control of its own enactments, at least in civilized communities ; why should we suppose that God is bound by his own laws, when the King of England is not bound by his ? When we have an uneasy conscience about some piece of judicial severity, we excuse ourselves by saying : " The Law

must take its course." But is it not ludicrous to suppose that God hides himself behind his own legislation, and says, "The Law of the Uniformity of Nature must take its course"? Always in the last resort a law implies a legislator and an administrator behind it.

The materialist, indeed, who will not admit a personal agency behind the law, will be driven back on saying, "Very well, if we are not governed by laws (except so far as 'by' means 'in accordance with'), at least we are governed by blind forces which enact these laws." Has he made his position any better? Has he escaped from personality by appealing to "forces"? If you trace the word far enough back, you will see that force also becomes part of the conception of personality. You may talk of one billiard-ball imparting its force to another, but you do not mean *its* force, you mean the force that was imparted to it—no, pardon me, not by the cue, but by the hand of a living person who held the cue. If the human race had been paralytic from its origin, we should never have talked about force, but only about motion. For you can see motion, by a rapid act of colligation; whereas force is a thing you can only feel. When we say the earth attracts things, we mean that it draws them towards itself: and we should not have any idea what that meant, if we had not the experience of drawing things to ourselves. Force, in the last resort, is the function of a person, just as law is the self-expression of a person. The forces that govern the Universe may be blind, but at least they are in some sense personal: if they are not, we are merely cheating ourselves by using the word: we are being as anthropomorphic as

the heathen, who saw a personal spirit in the legs of his table or the first cry of his child.

Behind law, behind force, we must be conscious, if we are to have any philosophy at all, of a personality at work. We do not see causes producing their effects, but Something producing effects out of causes. Yet it must be admitted, that in God's ordinary method of operation, so far as we are capable of investigating it, the causes from which he produces the effects do bear a uniform proportion, do stand in a uniform relation, to the effects they produce. God's action is free and his own, but he does, normally, express himself in accordance with certain principles or laws. The question remains for us, does he ever suspend the action of those laws ? Does he ever interfere personally, to reprieve us from their sentence ?

It is the standing problem of the theory of legislature, how such a thing as equity can be possible. If the laws are just, we naturally say, let them take their course : if they are unjust, then it is not enough to issue a single reprieve for a single individual, we must reform the laws themselves so as to suit the cases of similar individuals in the future. And surely, if God is an Omnipotent Legislator, he must have so constructed his laws that they needed of no exception: the law of the uniformity of nature is so arranged that, positing the material with which it has to deal, its action will always, in the long run, vindicate his fatherly goodness as well as his sovereign power. So wise is the plan on which nature is built up, that whenever and wherever man's need makes itself felt in crisis, and expressed in prayer, nature itself will automatically work for his good. When he made

a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder (if the past tense can be rightly used in describing his actions, with whom time is not), God foresaw the necessity of the wind which should dissipate the Armada, and so arranged the course of nature that this particular wind should come at this particular moment. With this simple and satisfactory explanation, why should we need any such hypothesis as that of miracle, so irrational, so difficult to understand ?

Belief in special providences is, I conceive, a necessary part of faith in the Christian Revelation ; and I hope I have enough faith to be convinced of it, whatever a posteriori evidence may be shown to the contrary. I do not quarrel with the assertion of a belief in special Providence. But I do very much quarrel with the idea that there is something more simple, more intelligible, more rational, about the idea of special providences than there is about the idea of miracles. Let us take an imaginary example. A great statesman is on the eve of carrying a measure which will permanently benefit the cause of progress throughout the world. His own personality is essential to the success of the measure. He intends to take a journey, but is restrained by the fact that a violent snowstorm comes on. The train in which he would have travelled is wrecked, owing to intemperance on the part of the engine-driver. God has protected his own, but look what it involves. The whole history of the atmospheric conditions of the world were so planned out, as to provide for the consumption of that single extra glass of gin which set the crisis in motion. Sick men died, poor women starved, traffic was disorganized, crops were affected, armies

were defeated, as the result of that one snowstorm needed to save the politician, and these are only the more immediate and obvious of the consequences entailed by the chain of causation which gave birth to it. All the other special providences of history had, so to speak, to be grouped round it and arranged with a view to it. Do I think this impossible ? God forbid. But it is certainly not simple. It is certainly not as simple as the fact of S. Catherine of Siena flying upstairs, which left the course of the world's governance exactly where it was before, entailing no consequences to speak of by way of cause and effect. That God should break his own laws at times seems to me to present no more difficulty to the imagination, than that the Reformers should have assigned certain proper lessons, apart from the regular course of lessons throughout the year, to the various Red Letter Saints' Days. But that God should have so arranged the world, that at certain moments the self-determined movements of man should be automatically overruled by the action of natural laws, seems to me as if the Reformers should have so arranged the course of lessons throughout the year, that in each case the lesson for the day of the month would have been exactly appropriate to the Saint commemorated on that day, without disturbing the sequence of Bible reading—just as, presumably by accident, the Magnificat occurs on the morning of the Annunciation. That God should make the sun stand still over the vale of Ajalon is no more unintelligible than the process by which an engine-driver reverses his engines. But that the natural breaking of dawn should be actually designed to prevent some tragedy is as difficult to the imagination, as that an

engine should be constructed which would automatically back when a truck twenty yeards ahead was obstructing the line.

In a word, God is not governed by his laws, but he does, normally, govern the world according to laws. What is there to prevent his suspending the laws, as the judge may suspend a human law for the sake of equity ? What, I mean, so far as *possibility* is concerned ? the desirability of the thing must be discussed later. The efficient cause (to use the old jargon) normally co-operates with the occasioning cause, but can it not dispense with the occasioning cause, if a moral necessity arises ? The only conceivable ground for denying this is a blind a priori belief, such as I have alluded to in a previous chapter, that the uniformity of nature cannot, *vi sua*, be subject to correction. Apart from such a presupposition, the evidence for our Lord's having walked on the water is every bit as good as the evidence for his having walked on land.

The idea that God cannot go beyond his own fiat is proper to materialists, who believe in no God, Deists, who believe in a God who has ceased, for practical purposes, to exist, and Pantheists, who think of God as so wholly shut up within his creation that he could not, without contradiction of his own being, violate the order of it. Materialists the authors of " Foundations " certainly are not ; Deism they would unhesitatingly repudiate ; and Pantheism is a charge I would not willingly level at them. On what grounds, then, or from what cause, do they insist that we should attribute to the Divine action miraculous methods, *only so far as miracle is equivalent to natural coincidence ?*

Surely their root difficulty is, not that God could not do miracles, but that he would not do them. They want to attribute to him a sort of consistency of character, which these catastrophic interferences with the course of nature would seem to imperil. They cannot think of God as "revoking," as leaving things till the last moment, as (so to speak) changing his mind. It would be inconsistent with his dignity to be always rearranging his scheme to suit his creature, Man, like a child continually altering the direction of its clockwork toy to prevent its edging off the table. If God (so they might argue) can really so work in and through his system of ordinary natural laws, as to grant prayers, guide issues, warn the sinner or rescue the Saint, surely it is only natural to suppose that he would restrict himself to these methods of dealing with mankind: why should he take the trouble (to put it in an anthropomorphic way) to work miracles as well?

It is very easy to construct a debating answer to this point; and namely this: "If God can at any moment do miracles, why should he take the trouble (to repeat the anthropomorphism) to make his providential scheme more than approximately accurate? It is always quite easy for him, when it comes to the point, to correct its inadequacies by miracle." But we must not rest satisfied with such an answer; partly because it only rebuts without refuting; partly because its terms are too crude; partly because we have not yet got at the root of the matter. For whereas a special providence always overrules the course of nature for our immediate good (otherwise we should have no conception of it), a miracle has not always this overruling, corrective

influence. The Five Thousand, or Cana of Galilee, have a providential object ; but the same cannot be said of the walking on the sea, the withering of the Fig Tree, or the Transfiguration. If miracles are to be admitted at all, it must be admitted at the same time that they are evidential in character.

For a providence is not an evidence. We have to start with a belief in the Divine Government of the universe before we can claim to recognize it at all. You pray for the sick man, and he recovers, but by a natural recovery ; you say God has answered your prayer, but what right have you to expect the street-corner atheist to believe you ? You cannot prove that, but for your prayers, things would have gone otherwise. You talk of guidance, but the materialist will accuse you of trying to lend a theological colour to mere coincidence ; he holds you to be as superstitious as the gambler who believes in his luck. And so it is with certain of our Saviour's miracles ; if they were in truth only interventions of Providence, they could prove nothing. If " Peace, be still " was not a creative fiat, but an answer to prayer, the sceptic is at liberty to say that the storm would have stopped anyhow. Peter's wife's mother may have been on the high road to recovery before the Master touched her.

No one, I conceive, will be prepared to dispute that the earlier Evangelists did attach an evidential significance to the miracles. " What a word is this ! For with authority commandeth he the unclean spirits, and they come out," " Truly this man was the Son of God," " Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done." But it is in S. John that the principle becomes

explicit. "He manifested forth his glory, and his disciples believed on him," "And himself believed, and his whole house," "When they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, they said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world." And the crucial case is of course that of Lazarus. Here Jesus deliberately stays away on hearing of the illness, presumably because a mere cure might be put down to natural causes, and on hearing of the death says to the disciples: "I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent that ye may believe"—the pain inflicted on Martha and Mary does not weigh against the spiritual value of the witness thus afforded to the incarnate omnipotence. No doubt in many cases the evidence afforded by the miracles was testimony as to the character of the Saviour, not simply as to his power. The lessons of a Father's love and a Saviour's tenderness would best be driven home if they were associated with occurrences that staggered the imagination, and so fixed themselves on the memory.* But, all through, the primary intent of the miracles is "that ye may believe."

Of course it is unfashionable to treat miracles as evidence nowadays. We believe Christianity in spite of the miracles which it involves, not because of the miracles which involve it. Naturally we do not use the miracles to convince people, because they are the hardest things to prove. If we ever did attempt this method, we were wrong. But because they are not evidence to us, it by no means follows that they were not evidence to the people who saw them. We

* On the same theory of education, Leonardo da Vinci's father cuffed him violently when he saw a salamander in the fire, lest the incident should pass out of his memory, and the evidence be lost.

all know how the true ghost-stories we hear are incidents which happened, not to the person we are talking to, but to his brother-in-law, a friend of his, or a man he once met on a steamer. And the fact that the evidence has been mediated even through two mouths in the telling leaves it little force. But put yourself in the place of the man who actually had, if he did really have, the experience. He knows, by an interior conviction which he cannot readily impart to others, that he was not asleep, not drunk, not in a nervous state: that he saw and heard what he saw and heard, not in a moment of abstraction, but with all his wits about him and all his attention alert. It means little to you, but much to him.

Hereupon the difficulty arises, How was it that more people were not convinced by the miracles of our Saviour? These things were not done in a corner: plainly the bare facts must have been obvious to the veriest sceptic. Here, it is true, another factor comes into play; the disciples after the walking on the sea were, says S. Mark, sore amazed, "for they considered not the miracle of the loaves, for their heart was hardened." They could accept the facts, but they could not put the right construction on the facts without an appreciation of the spiritual beauty of our Saviour's moral teaching; the facts as they stood could be explained, especially in an age of comparative credulity, on any number of rival hypotheses, notably on the view: "He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils." This argument our Lord can only refute by pointing to the fact that his whole life is a long war against Beelzebub; the moral witness supplements the witness of power. Without that, he might

have been an Apollonius of Tyana. To-day, whatever we may believe about God working miracles, it is exceedingly difficult to believe that Satan, or someone very like him, is not working miracles to the undoing of souls.

The witness of power needs to be supplemented: that does not mean that it can be dispensed with. And here we touch the very heart of the difficulty; for the modern theologian, who thinks it an outrage to the dignity of God that he should do miracles for purposes not evidential, thinks it an outrage to the faith and intelligence of the Apostles that they should need miracles to convince them. But I doubt if we wrong the Apostles by attributing to them a slowness of heart to believe which they cheerfully admitted of themselves. "We are witnesses of these things"—what things? Not the Sermon on the Mount, but the walking on the water; not the death of Jesus, but his Resurrection. They did admit the effect of the miraculous on their lives: even S. Paul attributed his conversion to a purely supernatural revelation. It might have been possible to convert them without giving them the impression that they were seeing signs and wonders; all I say is that that was not, as a matter of fact, what happened. And, so far as I can see, we must either admit that Jesus did miracles in order to convince his disciples, or suppose that he deliberately allowed them to think they were seeing signs and wonders, when they were not, to that same end. And which of these alternatives reflects more on the dignity of the Divine Nature, I leave it to the modern theologians to judge for themselves.

And if the Lord worked with his disciples, and con-

firmed the word with signs following, it is difficult to see why we should fix a date at which miracles ceased. From S. Peter to the Curé d'Ars he has not ceased to commend his gospel and to honour his Saints by such supernatural evidences of his favour. No doubt hundreds of miraculous stories are pure inventions, but it is only by a gaping undistributed middle that we could use this as an argument against all miracles, even if it were proved: we might as well say that all relics are necessarily spurious, because some have been faked, or that there never were any Christian martyrs, because stories of martyrdom were sometimes written from a merely literary point of view. We must again insist that it is not the reason, but the imagination, which is staggered by the idea of a miraculous occurrence. "Imagination" is not necessarily the forming of ideas in the mind which correspond to nothing in fact. It is a quality necessary to the appreciation of truth. Thus we say, "Just imagine it! Fifty thousand people starving in India!"—not meaning that they are not really starving, but that the idea of fifty thousand people starving is a difficult one to entertain in the imagination, because we are not accustomed to depending on our local harvests from year to year. Above all this faculty is necessary in Religion. I once heard a man in a public-house discussing the immortality of the soul; and he argued, oddly enough, that he could quite imagine living, say, several thousand years after bodily death, but that he could not imagine living to all eternity. Of course we cannot fully imagine it; nor can we imagine infinite space, because we are so accustomed to finite space and finite periods. Nor do we find it easy to "imagine"

miracles: we can accept them intellectually, and picture them visually—I have no doubt many of them are on the cinema by now—but imagination still shies at them, and always will, though meditation may do something to bring it up to the fence. But so long as my reason tells me that God, who created the world out of nothing, could multiply five loaves to feed Five Thousand: so long as my reason tells me that the Faith I hold was cradled amid a profound belief in such occurrences, and but for them, humanly speaking, would never have existed: so long I will refuse, please God, to be bullied by the cowardice of my imagination, so poor a thing that it cannot even face those metaphysical concepts of which reason compels me to admit the truth.

CHAPTER IV

CUI BONO? AN ENQUIRY ABOUT THE EMPTY TOMB

THE problem of the Resurrection, treated from a scientific point of view, resolves itself into two problems regarding two different sets of evidences. The one belongs, in logical phrase, to the method of Agreement, the other to the method of Difference: (1) How is it that the same effect, that of seeing Jesus present, was produced on the Apostles both on Maundy Thursday and on Easter Day? (2) How was it that there was a body in the tomb on Good Friday evening, and no body there on Easter morning? In answer to the first of these questions modern theology is apt to plead plurality of causes. That which produced on the senses of the Apostles the effect of believing that Jesus was there, on Maundy Thursday, was the fact of his presence in an ordinary human form; that which produced the same effect on Easter Day was not his ordinary human form, but some stimulus of an immaterial, and possibly a purely psychological kind.

Let us take this question first, leaving the Empty Tomb for subsequent consideration. There are three theories on which the "appearance" of Jesus is explained as nothing more than an appearance. Firstly, that of "subjective vision," which I suppose

means in plain language just this, that the Apostles were under a hallucination. They saw something which was not there; and, however interesting it may be to psychology what cause it was which produced these conditions, as a matter of logic there is no more evidence to be got out of depositions made in such circumstances, than if they had been drunk, or dreaming, or hypnotized. Their views were distorted, and therefore their views must be set aside: you may still believe in the Resurrection, but you believe it on no warrant of history.

And then there is the "objective vision" theory, which, one gathers, is not that held by Mr. Streeter, who examined the subject in detail in "Foundations." And a plain way of putting this would be to say that the disciples saw a ghost. There was something there, but it was not the material body of Jesus: you may call it an astral body, if you care to use the jargon of modern spiritualism, but that does not get you much further. The first thought of the Apostles (Luke 24. 37) was right; they had seen a spirit. Their afterthought was wrong, and it was on that afterthought that they based their subsequent message. What does it matter to us, that there was really something there, if we have no means of saying what the something was? Instead of a hallucination on the part of the witnesses, we are invited to believe in a spectral appearance having an existence independent of the perceiving mind (so far as anything has). Now, it is true Mr. Streeter assures us in a footnote (p. 133) that this appearance was directly caused by the Spirit of the Risen Christ. That may be so, but it is not evidence; so far as evidence goes, the appearance may just as well have been projected

by Satan, or by some occult force not yet known to us. We cannot argue from the existence of the apparition to the existence of one particular Mind which alone could have caused it. The Greeks fought round Troy ten years for a phantom: for a phantom, it would seem, we have been fighting for nearly two thousand.

Mr. Streeter himself has a still more complicated view, namely, that the physical tissues of the body of Jesus of Nazareth remained in the tomb; while the body which appeared to the disciples was another, quite distinct body, the body of incorruption in which, S. Paul assures us, mortal men can inherit the Kingdom of God. This view has certain recommendations, for the argument from our Lord's Resurrection Body to our own gains in exactness, if we suppose that it was, while still on earth, exactly of the same consistency and mode of existence as ours will be in heaven.

An older theology would have rebuked Mr. Streeter for this attitude, on the ground that the Resurrection body, whatever change it may have undergone, must contain within itself all the material atoms which went to make up its terrestrial counterpart; and therefore if the Risen Lord did appear in any ordinary "Resurrection Body," the flesh and bones of his mortality would nevertheless disappear from the Tomb, which Mr. Streeter frankly denies that they did. But we have no need to meet Mr. Streeter on such ground, or to discuss what is the truth as to our own Resurrection.

Let us, at least by way of an *argumentum ad hominem*, allow the truth of the scientific view that our bodies change—is it once in seven years? Per-

haps oftener—so completely that there is no material particle in my body now which formed part of it in 1906. It follows that if the Resurrection of the body implies a gathering together of each material particle in our composition, a man of fifty would find himself at the Day of Judgment very much in the position of the woman in the Sadducees' problem, only with seven different bodies instead of seven different husbands. But we may restate the orthodox view without reducing the Resurrection of the body to a mere survival of the soul. When we say that a thing is changed, we do not in strictness mean that it has become something different: we mean that it is the same thing expressed under different conditions. (We do not really "change" our clothes: we take them off and put others on.) When Circe *changed* men into beasts, they retained their identity in spite of the transformation; otherwise she would have been annihilating men, and producing beasts *ex nihilo*. The same thing can express itself in one temperature as steam, in another as water, in another as ice. And my body, however much its material particles may have changed, still contains an organizing principle, a form, which persists relatively unaltered. Though my body differs materially from my body in 1906, it still shows the scar where my appendix was cut out in that year. This form, this organizing principle, which continues during life to express itself in a series of manifestations, will re-express itself after my death in terms of a new creation, glorious and incorruptible. But just as I can point to my present body, and say, "This is the wound the surgeon's knife made seven years ago"; so I shall be able to point to my Resurrection body and say,

" This is the same body in which I loved, and sinned, and sickened, and died."

Allowing, for the sake of argument, the truth of such a restatement, according to which it is not merely my immortal soul which persists after death, but a bodily principle, something which I have in common with the beasts that perish, it would, I suppose, be open to Mr. Streeter to say, The material particles which had formed the body of Jesus of Nazareth still rested in the tomb; but his " body," in the theological sense indicated, that of a bodily principle, had already re-expressed itself in terms of a celestial mode of existence; and it was this body which the disciples saw. It was not a material body, for in the Kingdom of Heaven we are assured that they neither marry nor are given in marriage. It was the same body exactly as S. Paul saw, after the alleged " Ascension." To Saint Thomas, as to Saint Paul, the Resurrection Body of Jesus was evidence enough of his triumph over death, without any peering into the Tomb, to see whether it was empty or not.

Granted the philosophical possibility of the view, is it satisfactory ? For myself, I find it unsatisfactory on every possible ground; and I propose to combat it from three different standpoints. Firstly, a priori, it does not abide the question, Why should God work like that ? Secondly, from a historical point of view, it is a bad hypothesis, in that it explains little and leaves much unexplained of the positive evidence at our disposal about the Resurrection appearances. Thirdly, on the same ground, it does not give any explanation at all of the crying negative problem, the problem of the Empty Tomb.

It sounds very reasonable to suggest that our Lord rose with the same body with which we shall one day rise ourselves. But, supposing he did, why should he appear to his disciples in it on earth? Why should he not have gone straight to heaven, and manifested himself to them as he manifested himself later to Saint Paul? Why did it need more than a blinding light from heaven to convince the Magdalen, the Eleven, the two disciples? Why cheat them into the belief, or occasion the risk of their cheating themselves into the belief, that he was still alive in the same form as of old? After all, if it was an immaterial body in which he appeared to them, how were they to know it was not a spirit? So far as evidence goes, a Resurrection body was no more use to them than an astral body. If he was not living again in the same sense in which Lazarus lived again after four days in the tomb, how were they to tell that he was living again in any other sense than that in which Samuel lived again, when he was conjured up by the witch of Endor? As evidences, the Resurrection appearances would seem to have been, from the human point of view, inadequate, and from the Divine point of view, misleading. In a word, if Jesus did not stay on earth in his earthly body, why did he stay on earth at all?

Unsatisfactory a priori, Mr. Streeter's view is a bad hypothesis, because it does not cover the facts. I must, I am afraid, postulate here the position set forth in the last chapter: that it is only by a monstrous piece of intellectual arrogance we can allow the supernatural character of a recorded event to bias our judgment as to its having actually happened. If Mr. Streeter has an a priori prejudice against

miracle, then it is no use arguing, no amount of a posteriori evidence would convince him otherwise.* If he has not, then the doctrine of the physical Resurrection of our Lord is in itself as probable as any other, and must take its rank as a hypothesis on a footing of perfect equality with its rivals.

At the outset, our data are confused by a purely textual question: that of the ending of the Gospel according to S. Mark. It is true that the conclusion of that Gospel, after the end of the account given of the Empty Tomb, appears to be a later addition, designed to fill a gap. The loss must have been an early one, if critics are right in supposing that the other Evangelists had S. Mark's material to draw upon. We must in all probability attribute it to the loss of a final page or couple of pages in a manuscript: no very extraordinary hypothesis, considering how many classical MSS. have come down to us in this mutilated state. Whatever else is clear, it is clear that the words in verse 8, "Neither said they any thing to any man, for they were sore afraid," were not the conclusion of the Gospel as originally written, unless the sword of the executioner stilled the pen of the Evangelist as it rested on the page. And therefore, since the Gospel must have ended somehow, it is really no good for critics to go about talking of "the

* Mr. Streeter says (p. 138): "The scientific, metaphysical, and historical difficulties, which arise if this conception of miracle is insisted upon, are too well known to be worth repeating." We might add, too well refuted. How can Science, which is based entirely on the Uniformity of Nature, have anything to say as to events which are *ex hypothesi* outside that law? How can history, which starts from the possibilities of the character of man, lay down laws as to the character of God? And no metaphysical system, except Materialism, Deism, and Pantheism, quarrels with the miraculous: which of the three is Mr. Streeter recommending to our acceptance?

silence of S. Mark." You might as well cut out the tongue of a witness in a law-court, and then point warningly at his significant silence. S. Mark is not silent, he is silenced.

We have to fall back on other authorities. And if anybody is prepared to treat the evidence we have as untrustworthy later tradition, there is no reason why we should estimate it at all. It is just the sort of tradition that might have grown up round the story of the Empty Tomb. But if we are to accept it as evidence at all, as data by which to verify our conflicting hypotheses, then Mr. Streeter's hypothesis will not bear a moment's examination.

Let us begin with certain indications which are supposed by some to support the view that the body of the Risen Lord was not material. He did, certainly, appear and disappear suddenly (Luke 24. 31, 36; and perhaps John 20. 19); but no inference can be drawn from this unless we are prepared to say that he could not, or that he would not, have behaved thus before his Crucifixion. On what ground do we assert that a body which could walk on the water could not pass through a door? Or that he who "passed through the midst" of a crowd (Luke 4. 30, John 8. 59) could not by a similar exercise of power "stand in the midst" of his disciples? You may say, "The walking on the water was a miracle, and I do not believe in it"; but surely you are allowing yourself considerable latitude in your treatment of evidence, if you deny an abnormal occurrence in one place, and admit it in another, in virtue of an unproved hypothesis. You may say, "The language in the passages quoted does not necessarily imply a miraculous transit, in the case of the pre-Resurrection body." Not necessarily

perhaps, but on the miraculous hypothesis this is the natural way of understanding it. In any case, on the miraculous hypothesis we can find a parallel in the disappearance of S. Philip after baptizing the Ethiopian eunuch. This is not to say, that the non-miraculous hypothesis does not cover the facts alleged, but simply, that it does not cover the facts any better than our hypothesis, on which such miracles occurred in connexion with our Lord's natural body, both before and after his Resurrection. So far, the two theories leave nothing to choose between them.

That he did not, normally, behave thus before his Crucifixion may well be conceded, for the difference of circumstances accounts for the change. "Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly, not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before of God." If he did not want to force conviction on the faithless Jews, then naturally he was in the position of a king travelling incognito ; he was in the position of Prince Charles Edward when he came to London after the '45. The sudden appearances and disappearances are just what we should expect in such circumstances ; if he could do it, he would.

I suppose nobody would deny that any theory which represents the Risen Body as immaterial sets aside a great deal of positive evidence. I mean, that if there were no question at all of anti-miraculous presupposition, we should unhesitatingly discard those theories as an interpretation of such texts as Luke 24. 39, and John 20. 27. I do not quite know whether Mr. Streeter regards these as genuine remarks of our Lord ; or as a later growth of tradition. If the former, they certainly represent the Saviour in a curious light ; if the latter, I cannot see why we

should trouble ourselves to explain the Resurrection appearances at all; the whole account may be an afterthought. You can set aside the evidence, but you cannot get behind it. You can neither say: "It was deliberately meant to prove the material character of the Body, and therefore special pleading," nor, "It was only mentioned incidentally, and therefore may have been a slip on the part of the author"; the evidence for the Risen Jesus eating and drinking occurs incidentally in Acts 10. 41, and deliberately in Luke 24. 43.

And the most difficult passage of all to get over is another passage in the Acts; it is often quoted, but its importance is very apt to be missed. I mean Acts 13. 35 *sqq.*: "Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: but he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption." Now, the whole force of this passage is not to prove a priori from the Psalms and prophets that Jesus must have done thus and thus; it is to prove that since these prophecies existed, and the history of Jesus of Nazareth tallies with them, Jesus of Nazareth is the foretold Messiah. The fulfilment of prophecies in the Crucifixion is adduced, not to prove the fact of the Crucifixion, but the identity of him in whom they were fulfilled: similarly, I suppose, the fulfilment of the prophecy of the Psalmist in the Resurrection is produced, not to prove the fact of the Resurrection, but to prove the identity of him who rose. The argument is not, David foretold that the Messiah would rise again, This is the Messiah, therefore he

must have risen again: but, David foretold the Messiah would rise again, Jesus rose again, therefore Jesus is the Messiah. The resurrection is assumed as a minor premiss, not reached as a conclusion. S. Paul shows that David's prophecy could not refer to David himself, just as our Saviour proved it in the case of *Dixit Dominus Domino meo*. And in doing so, quite unconsciously and incidentally, he rests the whole weight of his argument on the physical resurrection. If the Resurrection Body of Jesus was the Resurrection body of the ordinary human being, then the contrast between him and David completely breaks down. Again, you can set aside the evidence, but you cannot get behind it.

If you are prejudiced against miracle, the only thing evidentially certain about the "Resurrection" is this: that the Apostles either had the conviction, or pretended that they had the conviction, that the tomb in which their Master's body had been laid contained no body on the Sunday morning. If they had all been expecting the Resurrection, then we might pronounce it possible—by comparison with other cases of optical illusion caused by a priori expectation—that this conviction itself was based on careless examination. But all the evidence, as well as all the natural presumptions, will assure us that at the most they approached the possibility with an open mind—even S. John, and therefore were likely to investigate carefully before they accepted the belief. There are still theories, however, which hold that the tomb was not really empty, but was thought empty by unreliable witnesses. There is Mr. Thompson's theory, for example, which, as far as I remember, came to this: The young man with

the linen garment, who ran away at the arrest of Jesus, was Saint Mark. Having lost the linen garment, he went home and put on a clean one; and in this clean garment, on the morning of the third day, he went to the grave, rolled away the stone (somehow), and sat upon it, the Body being in the grave all the time. When the women came with the spices he greeted them (for no obvious reason) with the words, "He is not here; he is risen." The women, without troubling to verify his statement, took it for the message of an angel, and went away satisfied. From this beginning the whole Resurrection-story sprang up.

Such theories, perhaps, will hardly commend themselves very widely on critical grounds. It is more fashionable for those who disbelieve the physical Resurrection to rest their case on the supposition that the grave was really empty when the women came, but that there were natural grounds of explanation; in fact, we are still in the Magdalen's position: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." "With a little ingenuity," says Mr. Streeter (p. 134), "it is not difficult to imagine more than one set of circumstances which might account on purely natural grounds for the tomb being found empty." Quite so; a little ingenuity will give one any amount of theories on any subject; the question is, whether any form of intellectual sanity will allow us to adopt *any single one* of those theories as adequate to the explanation of the facts. It is very painful to have to institute this investigation; for it is approaching the Divine mystery of the Resurrection as an ordinary detective "mystery," to be examined in the light of probabili-

ties ; and the devout mind shrinks from the Scotland Yard treatment of the subject. But it is necessary, from the pressure of unorthodox criticism, to weigh the whole matter in a cold-blooded, police-court spirit, if we are to bring home conviction on the subject—conviction, that is, as to the inadequacy of the naturalistic hypotheses hitherto suggested.

The view which Mr. Streeter seems to favour, is that " the Romans, fearing a possible disturbance, took advantage of the sabbath quiet to remove the body out of reach of the disciples." If so, it may be said at once that they were inspired by a distinctly un-Roman timidity. One of the prophet's followers had committed suicide ; all but one of the remaining partisans had forsaken him and fled. Did Pilate anticipate a disturbance from S. John ? Or from the Virgin Mary ? But the case is more complicated. Our view of it must naturally be affected, according as we accept or repudiate the account in S. Matthew, which represents the sepulchre as guarded, not merely by a stone, but by an official seal and a handful of soldiers. From a footnote on the page from which I have been quoting, it seems as if Mr. Streeter did incline to accept S. Matthew's authority on the subject generally. Now, if this is the case, on the theory we are now considering, Pilate did not put the soldiers there to protect the body, but to conceal the fact that the body was not really there. Surely this was a very stupid way of going to work. For if the soldiers were sufficient to guard the tomb from an attack, that is, an attack from the followers of the Galilean, it would make no difference whether the body were inside or not. And if they proved insufficient, the discovery of an empty tomb would

give the Apostles the strongest grounds for asserting precisely what (according to Saint Matthew) Pilate was specially anxious not to let them assert. Pilate may have been cruel and cowardly, but we have no reason to think he was a fool.

If on the other hand Pilate left the tomb unguarded, but took away the body for fear of a disturbance from the prophet's friends, the risk he ran was even greater. Anybody might find the body gone, and anybody might assert the Resurrection. Even if the idea of the Resurrection never entered Pilate's head (and in that case there was no real reason to protect the body at all), to remove the body would naturally give rise to annoyance on the part of the mourners, who would suspect that it had been removed for some sinister purpose—perhaps insult. And really, why should any disturbance be feared from the quarter in question? An explanation would be given by some of the Mid-Victorian Gospel theories (Bahrdt's, for example), according to which Jesus was the head or the catspaw of a powerful Galilean or Essene conspiracy. The Galilean crowd who hailed his triumphal entry might have been supposed to be a source of disturbance. But according to the view now accepted, the enthusiasts who had cried "Hosanna" had been turned into implacable enemies of Jesus by his claim to the Messiahship, now for the first time realized, and there was no following at all except the routed handful who had been present at the Last Supper.

It may, of course, be meant that a disturbance was anticipated from the Jews themselves, from the enemies, not the friends, of the Crucified. In that case, it would be quite simple to suppose that this

was not merely anticipated, but realized; that the Jews did come and take away the body. The hypothesis that Pilate feared the removal of the body by the Jews, and the hypothesis that the body was removed by the Jews, will in the main stand or fall by the same considerations.

Now, if the Jews had been savages, we might have supposed, or Pilate might have supposed, that they would be likely to remove the body in order to mutilate it. In the case of responsible and respectable people like the Jewish leaders, one may set the possibility aside. They had no motive for pursuing their animosity beyond the grave. They could only want to remove the body in order to hide it. What could they possibly gain by such a course of action? All they could thus ensure would be that the disciples should not hide it, and claim a Resurrection; but they would thus have defeated their own object, for the disciples could quite easily claim a Resurrection on the ground of its disappearance, whoever had really hidden it; and it would be singularly awkward for the Jews to refute the claim by saying, "On the contrary, we stole the body; here it is." Could the prestige of any set of rulers survive such behaviour? There are further difficulties in the view; for (1) How did Pilate know anything about the probability of any Resurrection-claim, unless the Jews told him? And why did they tell him, if they were going to steal the body? (2) If the Jews *really* stole the body, with a view to producing it if a Resurrection were claimed, why did they not produce it on the Day of Pentecost? These things were not done in a corner. Again, if Pilate really feared a disturbance, from whatever source, why did he ever let Joseph have the body?

Why not deal with the whole proceeding officially? And indeed, who would expect a disturbance at the tomb of the dead man? You do not need to produce a dead body in order to stir up a riot. The more you look into it, the plainer it becomes that there was no reason why Pilate or the Jews or anyone else should have given the body a thought, unless with special reference to our Lord's prophecy of his Resurrection; and if there was special reference to this, it was dead contrary to the interests of Pilate or the Jews to allow any chance of the body not being found in the tomb. Their only safe course was the course with which Saint Matthew credits them; and if they did take it, what naturalistic explanation is there of the sequel recorded by Saint Matthew? Unless we are to make an Antigone of Mary Magdalen.

Would a jury look at any of these theories? Or at any of the other naturalistic theories, such as that the women went to the wrong tomb? There is only one plausible naturalistic view, and that is this. No guard was set, no seal imposed; the stone was not heavy. On the sabbath day, some of the disciples, or Nicodemus, or Joseph of Arimathea, came to the sepulchre and took away the body, in order to convince the world that Jesus had risen from the dead. That was the view the Jews took of the incident; that is still the only view which has any measure of probability, if we are to rule out miracle. Mr. Streeter, in a footnote, calls this view the least probable of all. But his argument here is wholly a priori. It depends on an assumed knowledge of the character of the Apostles; of Joseph too, for the matter of that, and of Nicodemus. To the a priori outlook of the Christian, the charge is

impossible. But Scotland Yard could reach no other conclusion.

It is not argued that these are impossible hypotheses. It is argued that they are improbable, and therefore bad hypotheses. Mr. Streeter seems disposed to admit this, but he says: "Where a natural explanation of an event is at all possible, there must be very special reasons for falling back upon explanations of a supernatural character." This is one of those disastrous pieces of bad logic on which whole edifices of modern criticism are reared up. Miracle cannot be probable or improbable; it is either possible or impossible. If it is impossible, then we must explain the events otherwise at all costs, even if we have to say that the earthquake shook the floor of the tomb and so buried the body. If it is possible, then the supernatural hypothesis is as good as any other; and better than any other, because it involves no attributing of fantastically foolish motives to a crafty priesthood and a sensible Roman Governor.

If the question were, Would God, if he could, have done such a miracle at such a time? we might claim to weigh the probabilities. But it is surely indisputable that God would, if he could, have ratified by a miraculous occurrence our belief in the most central fact of the Christian hope. If it is a question whether God *could* do miracles, then you can only doubt them on the a priori ground that they are inconceivable. And if they are inconceivable, there can be no balancing of evidence and no a posteriori conviction.

Of course, the Resurrection involves a corollary, and I think it is largely this corollary the modern critics boggle at. It involves the Ascension. "Christ

did truly rise again from death, and took again his body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature; wherewith he ascended into heaven." Mr. Streeter says he knows of no living theologian who would maintain a physical Ascension in this crude form. I have no claim to be a theologian. I can only say that as a person of ordinary education I believe, as I hope for salvation, in this literal doctrine; I believe, that whatever change may have glorified the Risen Body when it passed beyond the cloud into a new mode or sphere of existence, the earth has ever since the Ascension been the lighter by so many pounds' weight, and the sum of matter in the world the less by so many square inches of volume.

CHAPTER V

VERBUM PRODIENS

THERE is no department of theology in which the method of hypothesis needs to be more carefully watched, than in any attempt to examine the meaning of our Saviour's "humiliation," and the conditions under which he lived his earthly life. Firstly, because here we are steering very close to those rocks of heresy, over which the councils of the Fathers have set the warning buoys of definition. And secondly, because, with a large mass of evidence at your disposal, it is so easy to construct hypotheses which will roughly cover the facts, and then take them for granted without in any way considering whether the indications on which they were built up were really cogent, or only pieces of circumstantial evidence. The old-fashioned theologian naturally labours under a difficulty. From a mass of facts you can prove that a man did not sin, but not that a man could not sin; you can prove that a man did not manifest ignorance, but not that he was omniscient. The deductive test may overthrow your a priori dogmas, but it cannot do anything, in the fullest sense, to establish them.

And at this point we have to go back behind "Foundations" to an earlier period of apologetic. It was not the theology of "Foundations," but the

theology of "Lux Mundi," which taught us to apply a posteriori methods to the mystery of the Incarnation. Perhaps the position was most clearly stated in the Bishop of Oxford's Bampton Lectures, where the Catholic theologian Lugo is severely censured for deciding on points such as the omnipotence or the omniscience of our Saviour from presupposition. Here, if anywhere, the mediæval mind argues deductively: God is All-Wise, All-Powerful, All-Good: Jesus was God; therefore Jesus was All-Wise, All-Powerful, All-Good. Arrived at this deductive certainty, we not only may but must explain on some other method of interpretation any text that seems to imply any limitation in the power or outlook, any defect in the character, of the Son of God.* And yet the facts in question, treated inductively, suggest to the modern critic quite another conclusion.

Last century, it seemed safe enough to subject our Lord's claims to such criticism. Indeed, it seemed to be promising from a devotional point of view, for the idea of a complete Kenosis or self-emptying of his Godhead when he became Man for us increased our sense of our Lord's Sacrifice. For our sakes, he consented to become dependent on human informants for the ordinary issues of life; he asked questions of the doctors, not to see whether they knew, but because he wanted to know. Was it not arrogating to ourselves Divine insight, to suggest that our Lord would have ceased to be God if he had abrogated, temporarily, his Divine attribute of omniscience?

* "I ought to know by this time," says Sherlock Holmes in the "Study in Scarlet," "that when a fact appears to be opposed to a long train of deductions, it invariably proves to be capable of bearing some other interpretation."

Last century; but that was before Schweitzer. A candid German, managing, where others had failed, to rid himself entirely of all prepossessions as to the outlook of Jesus of Nazareth, and to treat the question entirely in the light of the facts, came to the conclusion, since then widely adopted in a more or less degree, that our Lord was not merely liable to ordinary human ignorance, but was definitely, for some considerable period of his life, labouring under a profound delusion as to the meaning of his mission. He had got into his head the idea that the world was to come to an end in the *immediate* future, by some catastrophic Divine intervention which he described as "the Kingdom of God." All the morality he taught was an "ethic of the interim," that is, an ethic suited to people who were conscious that they had only a year or two to wait before the scheme of Creation dissolved. Tired at last of waiting for the fulfilment of his prophecy, he suddenly conceived the notion that the end of the world might be hastened, if he would give himself up to die. On the Cross, from moment to moment, he supposed that his death would be the signal for the dissolution of nature, and so died, "expecting to the last a telegram from heaven." This is the sudden and alarming representation of the non-omniscient Son of Man which has overtaken the modest Liberalism of the "Lux Mundi" school. Small wonder, if they tend to view this, their own creation, with something of the feelings of Frankenstein when he saw his monster brought to the birth.

The theory is of course a fantastic one, and in the next chapter I hope to adduce some reasons for thinking that the texts on which the hypothesis is

founded are really susceptible of another interpretation; and that the passages which are cited as confirmatory of it are not really confirmatory of it, unless they are subjected to a process of wresting and mangling and generally torturing which sound criticism will not suffer us to countenance. But meanwhile, it will perhaps be interesting to investigate what are the legitimate deductions from the hypothesis that Jesus of Nazareth was not omniscient, and where all this is leading to.

"Foundations," of course, professes to approach the Gospel narrative without any hypothesis to go upon; it is by way of letting the facts speak for themselves. Mr. Temple argues very ingeniously that we ought not to ask the question, Was Jesus Christ Divine? as if we knew exactly what Divine meant, and had no particular idea as to what Jesus Christ was like. Whereas, he urges, such a priori notions as we have of the Divine Being, even if they are accurate, are not necessarily applicable to God Incarnate; and the truer method is therefore to study, a posteriori, the character of Jesus of Nazareth, and to proceed from that to frame our notions of the Divine. "The word Divine suggests Omniscience; then where is the evidence that Jesus of Nazareth was omniscient? He suffered surprise and disappointment, and openly stated that he did not know the hour of the Judgment. The word suggests Omnipresence; what can be meant by saying that Jesus of Nazareth was omnipresent? It suggests omnipotence; where is the evidence that he was omnipotent? He 'could do no mighty work' in the face of unbelief" (p. 214).

Now, the only possible evidence that a man is

omniscient is that he actually did show a knowledge of everything. And the only possible proof that he is omnipotent is that he did everything. And the only possible proof that he is omnipresent is to show, by a system of conclusive alibis, that he was in each corner of the world at each particular moment of his life. And therefore, if we read the Gospels in the hope of positive evidence as to the existence of such qualities in our Lord, we shall naturally be disappointed. All we can hope to do is to examine whether the negative indications adduced on behalf of the ultra-Kenotic theory really do necessitate such an explanation, or whether they can be explained with equal probability, on theories with which Lugo might have expressed himself in agreement.

After all, you could not prove, even from so full a biography as Boswell's life of Johnson, that, for example, its hero was impossible to convince. All you can prove from it is that he never expressed himself convinced in any of the arguments of which we happen to have the record.

It would be waste of time to go into the " evidence " for the omnipresence of Christ ; firstly, because nobody suggests that he was omnipresent *qua* Jesus of Nazareth ; partly because there is only one passage which bears on the question one way or the other, namely, that in which he assures Nathaniel that he saw him under the fig tree, and this perhaps belongs rather to the question of omniscience, than to that of omnipresence. But the statement that Jesus was not all-powerful is one that needs examining, both for its own sake, and also for the analogy it bears to the statement that his knowledge was limited. Now, in the first place, is it not rather a remarkable thing

that the text Mr. Temple quotes, "He could do no mighty work there," is the only one which can be pressed into the service of this hypothesis? For here it is not a physical obstacle that we have to deal with, but one arising out of the imperfection of the ordinary human will. And in the second place, although modern critics will doubtless point with delight to the modification of the statement in S. Matthew, "He did no mighty works here, because of their unbelief," this does not, in itself, prove that S. Mark disbelieved in the omnipotence of Jesus, but only that S. Matthew thought S. Mark had been unguarded in his choice of expressions; whereas it does point very strongly to the fact, that at the quite early period at which S. Matthew wrote, any suggestion of limitation of power in our Lord did seem offensive to pious ears.

And now for the actual statement of S. Mark. The word δύναμαι, like the word "posse" in Latin, and the word "can" in English, is not restricted in its meaning to purely physical possibility, even when we are dealing with ordinary human agents. Thus Thucydides tells us (1. 130) that Themistocles, when accorded marks of special favour by the king of Persia, WAS NOT ABLE to live in his former simple style; i.e., he "could not bring himself" to do it. Thus Euryalus' mother in the Æneid (9. 482) addresses his dead body:

> "Tune ille, senectae
> Sera meae requies, potuisti linquere solam?"

"Had you the heart to do it?" So too Hypermnestra in Hor. Od. 3. 11. 30, says that her sisters

> "Impiae sponsos potuere duro
> Perdere ferro";

not suggesting that there is any great physical difficulty in killing a man when he is asleep. I am not adducing these as strict parallels to the present passage, but merely pointing out that in the classical languages the distinction between physical and moral obstacles to a course of action is not always clearly expressed. Nor is it confined to the classical tongues; you feel the same ambiguity of meaning when Richard II asks, "*Can* sick men play so nicely with their names?" and when Hamlet says to his mother:

> "*Could* you on this fair mountain leave to feed
> And batten on this moor?"

In the Greek of the New Testament itself *δύναμαι* has by no means a standardized meaning. "Can the children of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?" means, not that it is impossible, but that it is not natural for them to do so; they have no motive for doing so. Indeed, at the risk of appearing fanciful, we might suspect that when a conscious distinction is being made between the physical and the moral impediment, the verb used is not *δύναμαι*, but *ἰσχύω*. So it is certainly in the text, "Could ye not watch with me one hour?", where the contrast is being made between the willingness of the spirit and the weakness of the flesh; and the unjust steward, who is prevented by a moral feeling from begging, distinguishes this alternative from the other by saying, "I have no *strength* to dig," not *Σκάπτειν οὐ δύναμαι*, but *Σκάπτειν οὐχ ἰσχύω*.

I do not mean that anything positive can be made out of the use of the verb, or that, if we were treating of an ordinary person, we should not naturally conclude that it implied a physical impossibility; that, in fact, the cures wrought by our Saviour were

faith-cures, demanding, as a necessary condition of their consummation, a certain attitude of mind on the part of the patient. But if we have in this case to deal with a Person who is in some sense Divine, then we shall naturally be inclined to look into the circumstances more closely, and ask, whether the word "can" is used in a physical or a moral sense. If an atheist constructs the dilemma, "If God couldn't save Judas, how is he omnipotent? And if he could, why didn't he?", I suppose we always answer him by saying that there is an impossibility involved, but it is a moral impossibility, which is, in the case of God, equivalent to a physical impossibility, because it would be a contradiction of his own nature if he were to overlook a sin so damning. It is the same with the temptation of our Lord. Mr. Rawlinson, indeed, assures us (p. 368, note) that "It was not that our Lord *could* not, but that he *would* not sin." But it is a question whether such an antithesis has really any meaning, if we admit that Jesus Christ was God. And Mr. Temple, oddly enough, roundly asserts on p. 248 that our Lord "*could* not yield to the three Messianic temptations." Now if "could not" and "would not" are thus interchangeable terms when we are speaking of the Divine personality, in the sense, not of any external compulsion, but of a certain self-consistency in the determination of the perfect Will, then I cannot see how in this passage the phrase "He could do *no* mighty works" implies more than that he would not do them. He would not do them, because, if he had, the Galileans would not have believed; therefore the works would have been, not a salutary manifestation of his power, but a mere empty display—in fact, it would have been

equivalent to succumbing to the temptation of throwing himself from the temple pinnacle; therefore he would not do them, or he could not do them, whichever you prefer. He could not bring himself to do them, because he would not have been morally justified in his action, unless they would have been the means of converting some.

Now, this being so far as I know the only instance in which the language of the Evangelists suggests a physical limitation of our Lord's powers, and this being susceptible of a different interpretation, is it not at least arguable that the man whom the winds and the sea obeyed, the man who could multiply matter and raise the dead, possessed, whether he cared to use them or not, powers absolutely unlimited? It may, of course, be suggested that it detracts somewhat from the completeness of his Humanity: how could he experience the last depths of despair and disappointment, if he knew that he could at any moment lift a finger, and have everything his own way? But I confess that to my thinking there is a sort of tragic irony about the old-fashioned view from which we can gain more, devotionally, than from the view which supposes him to have been subject to complete human helplessness. He did allow a handful of soldiers to overpower him, though he might at any moment have summoned ten legions of his Angels to his succour; he did listen to the Jews crying, "If Christ be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the Cross, and we will believe him"; and knew all the time that he could—and he did not do it. I should say that our conception of the sacrifice of the Cross gains, instead of losing, if we believe that the death was voluntary in the

sense, not merely that he brought it on himself by opposition to the unfaithful shepherds of Israel, but that he might, up to the last moment, have saved himself: there was no point at which his sacrifice did not demand a continuous act of the will on his own part. Like the protagonist who has agreed to decide the issue of a war by single combat, he waves back, even in his dying moments, the Angel armies who are waiting impatiently to bring him support. Why else did he let S. Peter smite with the sword? Surely it was not in order to show the hopelessness of resistance—and that was all he could have shown, with three swords to defend him, but to explain that with all the forces of Heaven at his back he still preferred this way.

The *locus classicus* for this question should of course be the Temptation, and more particularly the temptation on the pinnacle of the temple. What was the point, it will be asked, of quoting the verse, "Thou shalt not tempt (i.e. make trial of) the Lord thy God," if there would be no risk, no act of faith involved in complying with the suggestion; if Jesus knew all the time that he could throw himself over with complete safety? Surely this implies, if not a defect of power, at least some defect of consciousness of power in him to whom the words of temptation were addressed. The old interpretation of the words, "Thou, Satan, shalt not tempt the Lord thy God, i.e. Jesus of Nazareth," is beside the mark; for this would have been an equally appropriate answer to the first temptation of all.

On the other hand, is it not equally true that this more modern way of taking the words, "I, Jesus, have no right to tempt the Lord my God," might

have provided an adequate answer for the temptation about the stones and the bread? For if, as is urged by the view of the circumstances we are now considering, Jesus was not conscious of omnipotence, then the temptation to turn stones to bread, like the temptation to throw himself from the pinnacle, was a challenge to Jesus to test the measure in which God was prepared to support him. And if he had refused this challenge, which he might have accepted without any danger to his life, was it not rather an anticlimax to issue a further challenge of exactly the same nature, the acceptance of which would mean death if he failed? The old view interpreted the answer thus: "You, Satan, disobey Scripture in demanding evidence of my divinity." The modern view interprets it thus: "I, Jesus, should disobey Scripture if I demanded from my Father evidence of his protection." Either of these answers would have been equally good in face of the first temptation. Are we certain that we are not taking the pronouns altogether too personally? The point of the quotation is surely no more than this, that God refuses to compel belief by purely thaumaturgic display. Now, the temptation of the stones was not to convince or to reassure anybody; Jesus knew, and Satan knew, that Jesus could do it if he wanted. And the temptation of the pinnacle was not to convince Satan, or to reassure Jesus himself; Jesus knew, and Satan knew, that Jesus could do it if he wanted. The temptation in the first case was to satisfy a physical need by supernatural action. The temptation in the second case was to convince, from the first, the crowd of Jews who would witness such a performance from below. The answer is, in the

first case, "I, Jesus, do not need bread." The answer in the second case is, "*The people down below ought not to need a sign.*" (It need hardly be said that this interpretation applies equally well, even if you refuse to accept the Temptation-story in a literal sense, though I see no reason to do otherwise.*)

The positive reasons for believing that our Lord was not merely powerful but all-powerful are naturally of an a priori character. After all, in saying that Jesus was God, we must mean something; and if, as Mr. Temple seems to suggest, we are to look entirely to the character of Jesus for our conception of the Divine, we shall seem to be arguing in something of a circle. To say that Jesus was Divine will be to say merely that Jesus was Jesus-like; not a very helpful proposition. I know that there are certain qualities which I expect to find in God; and if there is to be any meaning in the term at all, I must also believe that certain of these qualities are essential to, constitutive of, the character of God. If you point at a block of ice and ask me what it is, I shall know what to answer; but if you melt it down in a kettle and then ask me to call it ice still, I shall refuse, however much the modern mind may curse me for an obscurantist. And if I am to say that Jesus, who was God before his incarnation, was also God during his sojourn on earth, then I must have some notion of what I mean by "God" in order to do it.†

* Mr. Streeter's suggestions on this passage ("Foundations," p. 101) seem fanciful and ill-supported by evidence.

† Aristotelianism is doubtless out of date, but it is impossible, even for the modern mind, not to have some sympathy with the undergraduate who, when asked in his Viva Voce what Aristotle would have said if he had met a cow with five legs, replied, "He wouldn't have been such a —— fool as to call it a cow."

Suppose an eminent Egyptologist falls off his horse, and suffers an injury to the brain which involves complete and permanent loss of memory. You may say he is still the same man, though I am not at all sure whether an idealist ought to. But you can no longer call him an eminent Egyptologist; at the best you can say, that he is a man who used to be an eminent Egyptologist. He was an Egyptologist only in virtue of his knowledge; and in losing the knowledge he also lost the title. Now, if we are to suppose that in the Incarnation Jesus Christ divested himself of certain of those attributes which we necessarily have in our minds when we use the term "God," are we right in saying that Jesus was God? Or ought we, in strictness, to say that Jesus had been God, but had ceased for the time being to be God, and only became so again after his Ascent into Glory? That would seem to be the logical conclusion; he had ceased, according to Mr. Temple, to be omnipotent or omniscient; according to Mr. Rawlinson (p. 368) we need not call him formally impeccable. Was there anything, then, continuous in him before and after the Incarnation, except the bare fact of personal identity—supposing, *pace* the idealists, that this is a fact at all? And in that case ought we not to say, that Jesus was not God, but a very impressive, very acute, very good man, *who had once been God?*

We shall have to return in a later chapter to the conditions of our Lord's Incarnation; for the present therefore we may be content with remarking that it gives us a far more thinkable idea of the Incarnation, if we can, without doing violence to the evidence, suppose that our Saviour was at every moment of

his life all-powerful, and that his refusal to exercise his power was simply due to a continuous act of the will by which he kept that power in abeyance. We know he could walk on the water when he wanted to, but ordinarily he crossed the Lake on shipboard. We know he could produce food at will, but he preferred ordinarily to let his disciples go in search of it. We know that he could find money by miraculous means, but he went about with a store of money in case of necessity.

Now, if this is a possible account of his capacities—and, positing the miraculous, I cannot see how it is not the best account of the phenomena—may not the same have been true, *mutatis mutandis*, of his supernatural knowledge? "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did," "He knew what was in man," "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee"—Johannine quotations, but they show how one witness at least interpreted the evidence. It is much easier, of course, to conceive of a person possessing powers which he voluntarily refrains from using, than to conceive of him as possessing knowledge which, on ordinary occasions, he voluntarily hides from himself. Perhaps the best analogy by which we might hope to gain some realization of the latter situation is that of a confessor, who, in discussing casually the character of one of his penitents, is throughout conscious of the possession of knowledge, of which he cannot avail himself without breaking the seal. As the Omnipotent grew in stature, by voluntary self-limitation, so the Omniscient grew in wisdom, by voluntary repression of his divine opportunities for knowing. A priori, such a view is the most natural way of con-

ceiving the Mind of one who was both God and Man; does the view in question conflict with the evidence?

Clearly there is no difficulty about the fact that our Lord asked questions. Many of his questions are obviously merely catechetical, with no actual desire for enlightenment; as, "Whose image and superscription hath it?" "What did Moses in the law command you?" "Whom do men say that I am?" This explanation may be less readily received if we apply it to such questions as, "Children, have ye any meat?" "How long is it ago that this came unto him?" "Who touched my clothes?" But if we suppose that Jesus had sources of knowledge on which he did not draw if he could help it, these real questions are quite intelligible; Jesus depended on human beings for information just in the same way, and to the same extent, as he depended on them for food. And if we needed any assurance that the Evangelists, in attributing interrogation to him, had not necessarily any idea that they were denying him omniscience, we have only to look at Mark 9. 33, where he asks the perfectly genuine question, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? and when the disciples are ashamed to give the answer he demands, proceeds to give them a lesson in humility, clearly implying that he had all along known their thoughts.

But this is not perhaps the point on which most stress is laid. "Where is the evidence," asks Mr. Temple (p. 213), "that Jesus of Nazareth was omniscient? He suffered surprise and disappointment, etc." Now, the fact that he suffered surprise

is openly stated, the fact that he was disappointed can only be inferred from his language. But there is about this surprise and disappointment the same odd fact that we noticed about the alleged limitations of his power, namely, that he expressed them only in connexion with the faith or the unbelief of the world around him. "How is it that ye sought me?" "How is it that ye do not understand?" "He marvelled because of their unbelief." "He marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." Now, is it not possible that here again we need a closer psychological analysis if we are to see the thing clearly? We are, certainly, "surprised" in the strict sense, when something happens as to the manner of which we are ignorant; and "disappointed" when something happens contrary to what we had expected. But we do not always use terms carefully. I say, for example, that I "admire" a person who does his duty when I neglect mine: but although the word admire strictly means "wonder at," I do not mean that I find myself incapable of seeing how the man did it; on the contrary, I am painfully conscious of the way in which I might have done it myself. And the Greek *θαυμάζω*, when used in a complimentary sense, does mean, simply, to admire. When Jesus saw the centurion's faith, he did not *wonder*, in the sense of being intellectually unable to conceive of the process by which the centurion did it. He simply commented on the paradox (which it certainly was) that a Gentile should be found so far in advance of the chosen people. The faith of the Gentile was not necessarily a thing which Jesus did not foresee,

but just a thing which no one would ordinarily have expected. And there is very much the same feeling when we express the opposite of admiration. When the instructors of our youth used to say to us, "You surprise me," they had not forgotten the fact, were not blind to the fact, that there is a depraved element in human nature; on the contrary, they were very emphatic on the subject. They meant, not that our conduct was inexplicable or unforeseen, but that it was unnatural, unreasonable. They were not exactly surprised, but shocked. Nor do I find it difficult to suppose that Jesus of Nazareth should have expressed surprise, in cases where he could clearly foresee a result. He knew that the Jews would reject his message, yet, in the abstract, the idea that the trustees of the promises should be found thus unfaithful was in itself grotesque, and offensive to the sense of proportion. Perhaps our minds are not sufficiently elastic to allow us to enter into the feelings of an Almighty Creator contemplating the foreseen yet voluntary misconduct of his creatures. But in a loose and general sense I cannot think it out of place to describe them in the words, "He marvelled."

It has, of course, been claimed, that in minor matters of fact our Lord's conversation admitted of inaccuracies. Thus, he refers to the author of the Psalms as "David," although modern criticism has decided that David had nothing to do with it. For myself, I think I am perfectly happy to conclude, that if our Saviour really meant it was the work of David, then it was so, and modern criticism is wrong. But it is difficult to believe that Jesus would not have used the recognized title in this case; just

as we might refer to the author of the tenth book of the Iliad as Homer, without in the least meaning to imply that it really belongs to the main structure of the work. No doubt the same explanation should be given of the reference to "Zechariah the son of Barachiah" (Matt. 23. 35, Luke 11. 51), where the circumstances of the death of Zechariah the son of Jehoiada would seem to be attributed to that of the minor prophet of the same name. Our knowledge on the point is incomplete; but, supposing that there is an error of fact, it is hardly necessary even to explain the error as due to the Evangelist or his sources, though it is true that if it had been a mere slip we should have expected them to correct it. It is surely quite probable that in popular legend the two names had become confused, the tomb of the one being well known, and the writings of the other. There is no reason to suppose Jesus would not have countenanced what was in fact an error, if he was making himself intelligible by using the popular language of his day.*

Of course, the greatest crux of all remains to be dealt with. "Jesus," says Mr. Temple (*loc. cit.*), "openly stated that he did not know the hour of the Judgment." But this involves us in the whole question of the "Eschatological" outlook of our Saviour's teaching, which is so large as to demand a separate chapter for itself. We must therefore postpone the final crux till the next chapter. Meanwhile,

* It has been pointed out to me that there is another interpretation of the passage, which would identify this martyr with the Ζαχαρίαν υἱὸν Βάρεις (vv. ll. Βαρούχου, Βαρισκαίου) who was killed, according to Josephus (B.J.V. 4) ἐν μέσῳ τῷ ἱέρῳ long after our Lord's death. This interpretation would of course mean, either a very accurate prophecy on our Lord's part, or an anachronism on the part of his biographer.

I must conclude the present argument by giving expression to an uneasiness which I cannot help feeling in this regard. The a priori method means that you are constantly on the look-out for the destination to which your arguments are likely to lead you; you map out beforehand the possible direction of your conclusions, and if it frightens you, you do wisely to examine well the cogency of the arguments from which you start, and not infrequently find them inadequate. Too often the followers of the hypothesis proceed recklessly with their eyes close to the ground, like a hound on the trail, and have committed themselves to their path before they realize the morass it is likely to lead to. Let us lift up our eyes from the Gospel page for a moment, and ask the following rather pertinent question: If Jesus of Nazareth was not All-wise, what decent justification have we for asserting that he was All-good?

"It was not," says Mr. Rawlinson in a passage already quoted (p. 368), "that our Lord *could* not sin, but that he *would* not. The fact of the moral struggle in him and the fact of his actual sinlessness are both equally vital to the truth of the Incarnation." Now, without quarrelling with the position itself, which would be beside our present purpose, let us ask, what possible a posteriori justification there is for a statement of this kind? Saint Peter tells us that he did no sin; but S. Peter is our authority for the account (discredited by the modern mind) of his descent into Hades.* S. John represents him as

* I use this argument, of course, only to show that the modern theologian cannot legitimately appeal to S. Peter as evidentially valuable from his own point of view.

saying, " Which of you convinceth me of sin ? " but after all . . . S. John . . . he believed in the omniscience of Jesus of Nazareth. But what is the evidence of the other Evangelists ? All they do is to record a limited, a very limited, number of the actions of Mary's son, without expressing in any case any mark of moral disapproval. Surely this is a very poor *argumentum ex silentio*, and more particularly when we consider the nature of biography. Do we not all know modern " Lives," which have successfully glozed over misconduct so gross as infidelity to a wife in their subjects ? I do not know of any biographical evidence that Socrates sinned ; are we to say, " It was not that he could not, but that he would not sin " ?

But the position is even worse. If Jesus of Nazareth was conscious from end to end of his life of the fact that he was Incarnate God, then it is easy enough to read the record without convincing him of sin. But, so far as I understand the position of the authors of " Foundations," and more especially Mr. Streeter's assertion (p. 94), " If our speculations as to his inner mind are to avoid the anachronism of being merely modern ideas read back into the past, we may only penetrate the mind of the last and greatest of the Hebrew prophets by studying the psychology of the other prophets of the Hebrew race " ; we are apparently expected to believe that Jesus was not conscious of a Divine Mission at all until his Baptism. All I can say is, that if Jesus was not, at the age of twelve, fully conscious of his Godhead, then Saint Luke does record, for what it is worth, a very definite sin on his part, namely, when he caused distress and inconvenience to his parents by running away from

them and going off to hear the doctors in the Temple.

Nay, if he was not fully conscious of his Godhead—and, although after his Call he admittedly recognized that he was the Anointed One, I find it hard to suppose from Mr. Streeter's language that on the modern theory full Divine self-consciousness is ascribed to him—I do not know why I am called upon to approve of his action in sending the devils into the swine, or withering the fig tree. Fables? But at any rate the Evangelists seem to have believed them; and if the Evangelists did not think that Jesus realized his Divinity, they have put on record what ought, from their point of view, to be classed as sinful actions. Even the destruction of property involved in cleansing the Temple can only be justified with confidence if we think of Jesus as the conscious heir of his Father's house. Certainly, he was conscious of a mission; but are not the militant Suffragists conscious of a mission? I confess that if we in any way take a purely human standard as the measure of his actions, and ask whether we should approve, not merely of such actions but of such an attitude, in any convinced social reformer—a Savonarola or a Latimer—my own impression of Jesus of Nazareth would be that of a rather quick-tempered and intolerant man, perpetually failing to make allowance for the shortcomings of the official class, unduly provocative in his language—in a word, a fair type of the religious fanatic, with all his virtues and many of his failings. It is only if our Lord knew *exactly what he was doing*, only if he judged, and knew that he judged, his age in the light of full Divine knowledge, that I can feel perfectly confident in saying that he

was sinless. It is not enough to say that he felt certain he was God's chosen prophet: so did Mahomet, but I am not going to excuse all Mahomet's actions on that ground; he ought to have made more allowances for the possibility that he was wrong.

No; we shall certainly have to maintain the sinlessness of Jesus, if we are to maintain it at all, on the ground that it is, as Mr. Rawlinson says it is, vital to the truth of the Incarnation. And that ground is flatly a priori. It is not even obvious: I have already quoted a doubt, expressed to me by one of the most competent philosophers of my own Schools' year, whether in becoming perfect man Jesus ought not to have become a sinful man. The sense of being tempted, being capable of sin, is, according to Mr. Rawlinson, essential to his humanity; otherwise, I suppose he would say, Jesus would have had an unfair advantage in the moral struggle. Might it not be urged, that he would have had even more sympathy with human weakness, if he had experienced not only the buffets of temptation, but the numbing sense of despair which is the fruit of previous moral falls? That his perfection would, humanly speaking, have been more perfect, if he had had to rise on stepping-stones of a dead self; to build up his character, not merely through trial, but through failure? Mr. Temple thinks (p. 220) that a world redeemed is better than a world which has never known evil; which seems to me to be about on a level with saying that purple is a nicer colour than white—it is a matter of taste. But assuming the truth of that position, ought we not perhaps to say that the perfect life is one which has not merely combated temptation from the outside, but risen

out of sin into holiness? I can conceive such an argument being used, let us say, in fifty years' time.

The ground on which I should then combat it, the ground on which I should now assert the sinlessness of our Saviour, is precisely that on which I should maintain his omnipotence and his omniscience (understood potentially, ἐν κτήσει, not ἐν χρήσει): the ground, namely, that the Church teaches me he was God all the time, and I cannot think away from God his attributes of perfect Power, Wisdom, and Goodness. Viewed through these three slides, the picture seems to assume the colours of actual life; anything less will be tentative and hand-painted.

CHAPTER VI

EAGLES ROUND THE CARCASE

THERE is one aspect of the modern controversy on the subject of Eschatology in the Gospels which has, perhaps, been unduly overlooked hitherto. It is assumed, I mean, that the whole quarrel between the modern point of view and that ascribed to the early Church is simply that the early Church expected the world to come to an end in, let us say, A.D. 70, and the world has got past A.D. 70 without coming to an end. But it is doubtful whether this is really the full extent of the disagreement. It is very easy to be unfair or fanciful in tracing connexions between the practical politics of an author and his theoretical doctrines, and suggesting that the latter are, however unconsciously, to some extent explicable by the former—that Mommsen was an admirer of Cæsar because he was a Kaiserist, and so on. But I think it is neither unfair nor fanciful to suggest (although it may sound absurd to suggest), that a good part of the reason why modern critics associate Gospel eschatology with a defect of knowledge is precisely because they have no eschatology of their own. The difficulty with them is not really so much that the Final Cataclysm did not take place at such and such a date, as the fact that they do not believe in a final cataclysm at

all. They quarrel with our Lord's references to the Day of Judgment because they themselves are not prepared for the Day of Judgment. I hope no one will suspect me of the vulgarity of suggesting, that these gentlemen are *morally* unprepared for the event in question. I mean simply that they have formed a conception of the Divine Purpose and its working out in the world, with which the notion of a sudden Second Advent, coming like a thief in the night, is really incompatible.

For myself, I mean, I am intellectually prepared, though I am afraid to say that I am morally prepared, for the Day of Judgment to dawn at any moment. At any one moment, quite as much as another, the odds are, from my point of view, that the heavens will be literally rent asunder, that creation will really begin to throb with the birth-throes of a new existence, and that into that new mode of existence I, with all those now living on the earth, will be caught up without warning, to give account of my works. But I doubt if the modern theologian really regards this possibility as a possibility. Should it be realized, we should hear him, I fancy, not saying to the mountains, Fall on us, and to the hills, Cover us, but attempting to delay the trumpet-message with the protest, "Wait a moment! Wait, till we have converted India and China. Wait, till the Labour Movement is more in touch with Christianity. Wait, till we have settled up our differences with Nonconformity: till we have brought Constantinople to our side, and Rome to her knees." Whereas, for myself, though I can imagine myself entertaining, in the same emergency, the most acute feelings of terror, shame, reluctance, and remorse, I hope that

I should not be so untrue to my principles as to give way to surprise.

In all this criticism, I am not speaking without the book. The Headmaster of Repton, for example, commenting on the "pedantic antiquarianism" of the Church, remarks in a footnote: "This happens to be peculiarly out of place. The earth will in all probability be inhabitable for myriads of years yet. . . . We are the primitive Church." Now, whatever the value of the criticism, I cannot help feeling that the grounds on which it is here made to rest are singularly precarious. Even if we have conscientious objections to the idea of any breach in the order of nature, surely the fact that we can calculate the staying-power of the Sun does not in the least preclude the possibility of a cosmic catastrophe taking its origin from the influence of a hitherto unknown comet, or the spread of a noxious gas. What the statement amounts to is, that we have no scientific evidence that the world IS likely to come to an end soon: we have no evidence, scientific or otherwise, that the world IS NOT likely to come to an end soon. That belief arises simply from an a priori presumption that the world (or the Church) is going from good to better, and the Second Coming is nothing more or less than the consummation of that process. But what guarantee have we for any such assumption?

Nobody, of course, will deny that it is a consummation to be wished—to be prayed for. And we all like to foreshadow Utopias, though Plato has warned us that the habit is a manifestation of intellectual idleness. There is—to me at any rate—a great deal that is attractive about such a Utopia as Mgr. Benson's "Dawn of All," in which the Church is

seen vigorous, at one, and triumphant over her enemies. But however much I may like it, I cannot for the life of me see that there is any more reason to anticipate it than there is to anticipate the closing situation of another work by the same author ("The Lord of the World"), in which the representatives of Christianity are reduced in number to about four when the world comes to an end. Theologically, it seems certain that if free will is to be more than a name, the possibility must remain open that the majority, the vast majority of the world, will reject the Christian revelation. Historically, I think it would be difficult for anyone, however readily satisfied with the results of wide and careless generalization, to trace in Church history any progress, in the sense of improvement. Progress there may be; even steady development: but development in the Church (except on a further presupposition of her infallibility) is like development in nature or in politics, only a development from the less complicated to the more complicated: we have our scientific friends to thank for the importation of those question-begging terms, "higher" and "lower." "Lessons of history" are always dangerous things to play with, but nowhere more so than in the annals of our Religion.

And if neither theological probabilities nor historical considerations allow us to look forward with confidence to a glorious consummation, assuredly there is nothing in the attitude of our Saviour and his Apostles to justify it. S. Paul does indeed speak to the infant Churches as if their growing together in grace was a natural process, by which the supernatural organism was to realize its idea;

" that we may all come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." But this is no more than the language of one who sees clearly that individual perfection can only be achieved by members of a body as members of a body: it does not suggest that there is anything lacking in the Church, for the supply of which it depends upon its numbers, or upon its future. There is no " Futurism " about S. Paul: when he does look forward, it is with the hourly expectation of a thunder-clap.

But the modern theologian is a Futurist in a very real sense. The future of the world and of the Church is to him a foregone conclusion, and of a kind very different from anything forecast by the Prophet of Nazareth. The signs of the preparation for the Second Coming are found not in wars and rumours of wars, but in a programme of universal peace; not in famines and pestilences, but in the diffusion of Free Trade and the general improvement of hospitals. He cannot believe that many shall be offended, because Christianity is to be purged of all that could possibly offend: or that false prophets will arise and deceive many, because the Truth is great and will prevail: or that the love of many shall wax cold, because charity is soon to be universal and dominant. He looks forward to a completion, *in this world*, of the design of our creation; not to a sudden interruption of the process. The two men in the field will surely be left to accomplish their harvesting; the two women on the housetop will have ground the last ear of corn before the world is ready for the Coming.

But surely there is room for pessimism. The Cross may be making converts in India; so is the Crescent

in Liverpool. Christianity may be gaining ground in France; so is Christian Science in America. Materialism is beginning to own itself beaten; but Spiritualism is rearing a far more venomous head. We look round on heresy flourishing in England, war brewing in Germany, Antichrist throned in Portugal. Thank God we can still *hope* that the end is not yet. But we have no right to cease to expect it. We work (God forbid that we should do otherwise) for the spreading of the fire Christ came to kindle, but always with the possibility that when he comes he will not find faith on the earth. We work feverishly, as those who know that their work is only temporary; like children making castles in the sand, in full consciousness, not only that we are building with perishable stuff, foredoomed to ultimate dissolution, but also that at any moment our Father may call to us to come home, and leave the work half-finished.

Now if there is any truth in this contrast of views, or rather, not of views, but of atmospheres—the rival atmospheres, we might say, of the present Headmaster of Repton and the present Dean of S. Paul's—it follows that the modern theologian of the school we are here considering quarrels, not merely with the apparent dating of the Day of Judgment in the Gospels, but with the whole spirit, the whole machinery of it. The whole thing is a mere piece of Oriental imagery; and our want of sympathy with it is to be explained by the fact that the knowledge of Jesus of Nazareth was limited. Whereas, I am content to believe that we really know nothing about what the end of the world will be like, apart from the Gospels. And therefore, when we are trying

to verify the hypothesis that our Lord possessed full Divine knowledge on earth, and the rival hypothesis that he did not, we cannot verify either by appealing to what he said about the character and the circumstances of the Second Advent, because we have as yet (*pace* the Modern Mind) no data to go upon; we can only verify them by his apparent attempts to *date* the Second Advent, because we know that it did not happen, in the sense which the contexts seem to demand, in the first century A.D.

In fact, if we are to canvass this matter in honest logic, we must give up all this talk of Oriental metaphor, and the influence of Jewish Apocalyptic teaching, with which the so-called "historical method" has hypnotized and befogged us. We must ask, not how or in what circumstances, but *how soon*, Jesus of Nazareth expected the end of the world to come. If his expectations were unfulfilled, then he did not possess full Divine knowledge: if the facts are susceptible of another interpretation, then it is still possible for us to believe that he did.

The rival hypotheses we have to consider, are now no longer that of his omniscience and that of his limited knowledge, but (1) that he thought the world would end soon after his Crucifixion, (2) that he did not think so (not necessarily, that he knew to the contrary, that would be beside our present purpose). Taking this second hypothesis first, there seem to be one continuous passage and two isolated texts which definitely conflict with it, at any rate on first reading. The long eschatological passage (Matt. 24., Mark 13., Luke 21. 5–36) is so complicated in its bearings that it demands a separate treatment, which has been attempted in the appendix.

For the present, it must be enough to record my conviction that, quite apart from theological presupposition, the passage when read as a whole must be taken, not as a prophecy of when the world will come to an end, but as a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, and that, in view of this, any misconceptions to which it may have given rise (possibly, even in the imagination of the Evangelists themselves) as to the date at which the Second Coming was to be expected, are necessarily foreign to its thought.

But there remain two isolated texts, which are not so easily disposed of. The first in importance is Matthew 16. 28 (Mark 9. 1, Luke 9. 27), a saying which was apparently dated as immediately preceding the Transfiguration. "There be some standing here which shall not taste of death until they see the Kingdom of God having come in power." So S. Mark; S. Luke simply, "till they see the Kingdom of God"; S. Matthew, "till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom" (here, as elsewhere, S. Matthew's language is the most explicitly eschatological of the three). Certainly the words suggest that the world will come to an end within the lifetime of some of the Apostles. Is there an alternative explanation to be found? I am afraid I am content to find it by the old-fashioned expedient of completing the catena with a reference to the Fourth Gospel. "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" (John 21. 22) does surely look as if it belonged to the same direction of thought; there is the same emphasis, though with less eschatological colouring, on the idea of "the coming." And as I firmly believe that all the three Synoptists were in the habit of arranging the sayings of Jesus, not in

an external order based on the time when they were delivered, but on an internal connexion of subject-matter, I do not find it hard to conceive that S. John has given us the right form, and also the right context, of this prophecy, viz. after the Resurrection; that the Evangelists, or their common source (whether our own S. Mark or some other), tacked this mention of the Coming of the Son of Man on to another mention of it which occupies the preceding verse in each case. Further, that they represented the actual words in a slightly distorted form, which was already in danger of giving rise to the misconception which did (on S. John's own showing) later become attached to them; viz. that S. John himself would live till the end of the world.

Now, it is clear that S. John did not find any difficulty in the words, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?": it is equally clear that S. John wrote at a period or in an atmosphere in which eschatology was by no means in the foreground. It will, therefore, be not unnatural to assume that the words "till I come" (or, strictly, "while I am coming") suggested to him, not the end of the world, but some other manifestation of the power of Christ. Most probably, one would think, the destruction of Jerusalem, followed by the final impetus given by that event to the Jewish Dispersion, and the consequent spread of the Gospel. It may be noticed that S. Mark's words do not suggest a final cataclysm, for if the Coming is the End of the World, how is it that in this passage the survivors are said to see the Kingdom of God, not coming, but having come? Surely it is much more natural to talk of seeing the Church of God *having been established*,

than to talk of seeing the end of the world *having come*. Those who dispute the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel will, no doubt, be loth to believe that it alone has preserved the true form of our Saviour's prophecy; but if we take his words as a personal reminiscence, and the words of the Synoptists as variants of the current eschatological misinterpretation, it is difficult to suppose that Jesus was thinking of the end of the world at all when he made the original remark.

It is a somewhat bolder speculation; but it is perhaps worth suggesting that the phrase "This generation shall not pass, until all these things be fulfilled" (Matt. 24. 34, Mark 13. 30, Luke 21. 32) is yet another variant of the same saying, which, preserved independently, has naturally found a home for itself in that great cento of isolated eschatological texts which seems to me to form the basis of the final prophetic discourse.

The same cannot be said of the remaining difficulty, which arises from Matthew 10. 23: "When they persecute you in this city, flee unto the other. For verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man come." But this text is peculiar in several ways. It occurs neither in S. Luke nor in S. Mark. It is out of context, probably, for the whole passage in which it occurs is apparently a cento of S. Matthew's own; the preceding remarks belong in S. Luke to the discourse on the last judgment, and the following ones are ascribed by him to the Sermon on the Mount, while S. John makes them part of the discourse in the upper room. And further, if there is any force in the conjunction "for," the passage is not, *vi verborum*,

intended to emphasize the imminence of the Second Coming, but the slowness of the process of evangelization. Why should the imminence of the Coming be a reason for fleeing from persecution? Rather, one would have thought, it would be a reason for enduring persecution on the spot. Surely the sense is this: "When they persecute you in one city, flee to the next; do not be frightened of thus leaving your work half-finished, as if you expected every city to be converted in the long run; for I assure you that the Jews are such a stubborn race that some of them will remain unconverted, yes, even till my coming." In fact, so far from dating the Second Coming, the passage when read in its true light seems to use the phrase "till I come" to express a very long stretch of time. So we say, "You might argue with that man till doomsday, but you wouldn't convince him." Therefore, even if ἕως ἐλθῃ must necessarily be taken as referring to the end of the world, it may still be considered true after nineteen centuries of Christian preaching. But I cannot find it hard to believe that our Lord's original remark here was a reference (with the same implication as I have indicated above) to the destruction of Jerusalem; and that if there is anything specifically eschatological in the passage, it belongs, not to the remark as made, but to the colouring given to it by a single Evangelist.

It cannot be said that there are any other passages besides those just referred to which necessarily, or even naturally, suggest that our Lord's teaching was full of emphatic insistence on the shortness of the remaining time left to the human race. "The Kingdom of Heaven has drawn near" is a perfectly

explicable phrase without any reference to the Last Things, if we assume that Jesus was himself the Messiah, and knew it. The attempt of Schweitzer to prove that all our Saviour's teaching, in the Sermon on the Mount for example, was intended to be, not instruction for a future Church, but an *interims-ethik*, a set of directions for fleeing from the vanity of a world which was so shortly to come to an end, with his further gratuitous assumption (in defiance of texts like Matt. 5. 12) that the basis of this ethic was a Calvinistic one, since the Kingdom of Heaven was to be inherited, not by merit, but by arbitrary election—all this is manifest special pleading. The ethical teaching can perfectly well be taken, as it has been taken for centuries, to be a permanent code of morals (not by any means all new), which appeals, not to the brevity of this world's duration, but to the inherent vanity of this world's existence. It is all perfectly in accordance with the hypothesis that Jesus did not think the end of the world was coming soon.

And now, if we proceed to verify by the evidence the hypothesis that Jesus *did* think the end of the world was coming soon, we shall find that a very considerable amount of wresting and explaining away is needed before we can say that it covers the whole of the data at our disposal. Do not the Parables of the Leaven, the Mustard Seed, and the Tares (to mention no others) involve the idea of a *long* period of growth, and of probation? Is not the suggestion of the calling in of the Gentiles, the preaching of the Kingdom to the whole world, a rather anomalous suggestion, if it is made with the definite conviction that there are only forty year

in which it can take place ? Does not the very assertion, that the persecution which is soon to come is greater than any which has hitherto happened, *or will happen hereafter*, point clearly to a future far beyond that persecution itself ? Do not the words, " Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," lose their whole emphasis if the end of the world is explicitly dated for the day after to-morrow ? I confess that if I believed in the " evidences " of the eschatological outlook of Jesus of Nazareth, I should feel bound to trace the lines of thought here indicated to a wholly different stratum of theology, and to consider the Gospel narrative to be a far more inextricable patchwork of documents than the wildest of German critics has hitherto invented for us.

What our Lord clearly did want to instil into the minds of his disciples—it is illustrated most clearly by the allegory of the faithful and the unfaithful steward (Matt. 42. 51, Luke 12. 42–49), and the warnings of Luke 17. 23 *sqq.*—was a psychological state of suspense as to the time of his coming, which any attempt to date the Coming would have entirely overreached. " Ut ignorantiam illam diei omnibus taciti," says S. Hilary, " non sine utilis silentii ratione esse sciremus, vigilare nos Dominus propter adventum furis admonuit. . . . Paratos igitur esse nos convenit, quia diei ignoratio intentam sollicitudinem suspensae expectationis exagitet." This suspense is, or ought to be, a permanent condition of the Christian life. It is so to us, for the judgment may fall upon us to-morrow ; in order that it should be so to the Apostles themselves, it was necessary that there should be no sort of indication of the date of the Coming. And anyone who will candidly examine

the passages which refer to the End of the World, although he may find much that is confusing there, will inevitably, I think, be led to the conclusion that they represent a determination on our Lord's part, not to prophesy the date of the Coming, but to baffle the curiosity his followers felt on the subject. That the excited temper of the next generation should have sought to find, in his evasions of the question, an answer to the question itself, is surely a very ordinary piece of human nature.

We have, then, produced reason for supposing that the survival of the scheme of Creation after the death of our Lord's own disciples does not prove him to have been a false prophet. There is, however, one striking text arising out of the same set of passages, though by no means similar in its bearings, which would seem to suggest that his earthly knowledge was limited. "Of that day and of that hour," he himself has told us, "knoweth no man, neither the angels in Heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only" (Mark 13. 32, and parallel in Matthew). "He openly stated," says Mr. Temple ("Foundations," p. 213), "that he did not know the hour of the judgment." But, whatever the difficulty of the passage, we have surely the right to claim that it does not affect our view of the limitation in our Lord's knowledge involved in the Incarnation, in any way whatsoever. For the statement is not a statement about Jesus of Nazareth merely, but about the Eternal Word in the fulness of his divine Being. Were the phrase even "the Son of Man," we might have supposed that it could be rendered, "Christ, as Man, in so far as he is man." But the bare words, "the Son," set in close juxtaposition to the mention

of the angels *in Heaven*, cannot be taken as referring to any temporary limitation of the divine Nature. The case for the prosecution proves too much; instead of concluding that the Incarnate abrogated, for the time, his omniscience, it concludes that he never had complete omniscience to abrogate. The difficulty of the passage must be left for the decision of metaphysical theologians; in the matter of the alleged Kenosis it has no bearing one way or the other.*

The view that Jesus enjoyed, as Man, the full knowledge which he had enjoyed, and now enjoys, in Heaven, has passed through the fire of verification, and has been shown, I hope, to be on the least computation an arguable position. And now, what will be the theological corollaries of the rival view? If Jesus was so far mere Man, that he was not merely subject to ignorance but *de facto* guilty of erroneous statement, on what basis is our Christian certainty to rest? "This is my Body, This is my Blood"; may not that be a strange delusion, an empty boast? "Whoso marrieth one that is divorced committeth adultery"; wasn't that perhaps a fad? A little piece of pardonable bigotry? "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature";

* This is, of course, assuming that Jesus was the Eternal Word, and knew that he was the Eternal Word. On the other hypothesis you may prove what you will, but for myself I have no stomach for the controversy. All I am concerned to show is that this passage does not lend *support* to either hypothesis. For my own tentative explanation I would refer the reader to p. 130 *n*. I am aware that some orthodox theologians have tried to get over this difficulty by assuming that "the Son" means "the Son of Man," i.e. Jesus in his humiliation. But, if it is possible to read this emphasis into the passage—an emphasis which, on the face of it, is not there—we might surely go further, and explain "the Son of Man, *in so far as* he is the Son of Man": that is, the information in question belongs to the divine, but not to the human knowledge of Jesus.

wasn't that unduly sanguine? "Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"—an eschatological conception due to the idea that the end of the world was at hand, and the faithful must be sealed in their foreheads; mightn't we dispense with it nowadays? "Receive ye the Holy Ghost"—by what authority? "Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them"—with what certainty? "Sell all thou hast, and give to the poor"—a short-sighted, uneconomic piece of advice: "Some eunuchs have made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake"—doubtless through misguided fanaticism. "Resist not evil"—the sentimentalist's anticipation of Tolstoy; "Ye cannot serve God and mammon"—otherworldliness, out of harmony with the spirit of the twentieth century: "Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes"—the appeal *ad populum* of the prophet who cannot see eye to eye with the educated classes. That is Christianity without the Ipse Dixit of our Saviour: and who shall prove the validity of that Ipse Dixit, if Jesus of Nazareth laboured under a lifelong illusion? The Sacraments, the Evangelical Counsels, the root-principle of Christian morals, all alike shrink from the test.

APPENDIX

ON THE FINAL ESCHATOLOGICAL DISCOURSE IN THE SYNOPTISTS

SINCE our ideas of the relation between the contents of the three Synoptic Gospels are generally somewhat confused, it may be well to preface the discussion of the passage we have now to consider with an abstract of the various accounts.

S. Matthew 24.	S. Mark 13.	S. Luke 21.
(1) Question as to date of destruction of Temple, Parousia, and End of the World.	(1) Question, When will temple be destroyed ?	(1) As in Mark.
(2) Warning against false eschatology.	(2) As in Matthew.	(2) As in Matthew.
(3) Prophecy of wars, earthquakes, etc. (beginning of woes).	(3) As in Matthew.	(3) As in Matthew.
(4) Prophecy of tribulation.	(4) As in Matthew, with added directions.	(4) BEFORE THIS there shall be tribulation. Directions as in Mark.
(5) Hearts shall wax cold ; the kingdom must be preached in all the world, then the end will come.	(5) Abomination of desolation, etc., as before.	(5) Jerusalem encompassed with armies, and Flight as before.
(6) Abomination of desolation, and Flight to the Mountains.	(6)=(7) in Matthew.	(6) Definite prophecy of destruction.
(7) Pray that it be not in the winter ; it will be shortened for the elect's sake.	(7)=(8) in Matthew.	(7) Simultaneously, sun darkened, etc.

S. Matthew 24.	S. Mark 13.	S. Luke 21.
(8) False Christs and false prophets: "Behold, he is in the wilderness."	(8)=(10) in Matthew.	(8)=(9) in Mark.
(9) Compared to lightning and to the eagles.	(9) Then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds.	(9) When these things begin, your redemption is drawing nigh.
(10) Immediately after, darkening of sun, etc.	(10)=(13) in Matthew.	(10)=(11) in Mark.
(11) Then shall appear the Sign of the Son of Man.	(11)=(14) in Matthew.	(11) Command to watch.
(12) And they shall see him coming with clouds.	(12)=(15) in Matthew.	
(13) And he shall send his Angels to gather the elect from the ends of the world.	(13) Command to watch, with abbreviated Parable of Talents.	
(14) Simile of the fig tree.		
(15) Only the Father knows.		
(16) The days of Noah.		
(17) Men in the field and women at the mill.		
(18) The householder and the thief, and the faithful steward, with command to watch.		

Now, on the face of it, the impression we most naturally derive from this comparative table is that S. Luke alone of the Evangelists actually enters into any detail about the destruction of Jerusalem—her beleaguerment, her being trodden under foot of the Gentiles—and also the only one who does not give any account of the judgment of the elect, contenting himself with the statement that when these things begin, the time of Redemption is drawing nigh. And I suppose the critic who is not concerned to defend the *bona fides* of the sacred authors naturally comes to the conclusion, that SS. Matthew and

Mark both wrote before the destruction of Jerusalem, when it was still possible to expect the judgment to follow immediately upon the destruction: whereas S. Luke, writing later, could give an elaborate *ex post facto* account of the destruction, but could only put the last day into the account as something that would *soon* follow—since he wrote at a time when the destruction had happened without that Last Judgment. "Look up, lift up your heads," he says, to encourage his contemporaries, "for your redemption draweth nigh." Now, if this is so, it is clear that the Son of Man coming in clouds (or the Sign of the Son of Man) is not the Last Day itself, but something connected with the destruction of Jerusalem; and further, that S. Luke could safely leave this prophecy as it stood, AS SOMETHING THAT HIS CONTEMPORARIES HAD ALREADY SEEN HAPPENING. And for myself, I am quite contented with a wild obscurantist guess, that some manifestation of God's condemnation of Jerusalem did actually appear in the sky, like the Labarum of Constantine; that this was what Jesus foretold; that this was what was recorded by the heathen historian, when he says that there was a mysterious voice which cried, "Excedere deos; simul ingens motus excedentium." The Sign of the Son of Man naturally seemed to the rank and file among the victors, with their tribal ideas of the Divine Nature, to be the stir made by the gods as they left the conquered city.

Now, if the Coming of the Son of Man as described in those words is not something to which we have still to look forward, but something which actually happened when Jerusalem fell, is there anything left in the Gospel accounts which DOES refer to the end of the world at all? "Surely there is," it will be said; "for no other explanation can be given of the statement that the Son of Man will send forth his Angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the end of earth to the end

of Heaven." SS. Matthew and Mark certainly seem to have attached this meaning to the words, but if they did, is it certain that they were right? Is it not possible that the word ἄγγελοι should be translated "messengers," its literal meaning? The speculation is not quite as wild as it sounds, for immediately before this, according to S. Matthew, Jesus had been accusing Jerusalem of stoning them that were *sent* unto her, and complaining that he had often been willing to *gather* her children together—the same word (συνάγειν) is also used for the "gathering together" of the elect in all the world which is to be effected by the "angeloi" here spoken of. It seems possible that verse 14 of Matthew 24. is really a variant of this prophecy—S. Matthew, according to modern criticism, is perpetually being guilty of "doublets"—but more explicitly preserved in the form: "This gospel shall be preached in all the world for a witness to them and to the Gentiles, and the end will come (only) after that." In a word, on our view the Son of Man is to send forth, after the Fall of Jerusalem, not his Angels, but his messengers (that is, his Apostles), to gather his elect, not *cogendo omnes ante thronum*, but simply by putting before the world, for its acceptance or rejection, the message of the Kingdom.

If we may be allowed to follow out this pleasing obscurantist fancy any further, it will be as well to discover, by comparison of the three accounts, what our Lord really did say on the occasion in question. He had just prophesied that not a stone of the Temple would be left standing. When they are in private, the disciples ask him, when these things are to be. (There is no mention, in their question, of the End of the World, except in S. Matthew, who was probably expanding his sources.) He replies: "You must be careful not to be deceived. People will come and say, 'I am Christ,' but you must not believe them. Wars, earthquakes, famines—all these you will hear of, but this is not the end (of Jeru-

salem ?). At that time there will be a persecution (after the death of S. Stephen ?). Well, when you see the abomination of desolation—you will know what that means when it comes—you must flee from Jerusalem ; for those within will suffer terribly (this was abundantly fulfilled). At this moment there will be more false Christs and false prophets : pay no attention to them. (S. Matthew places here a verse about eagles and lightning which probably belongs to a different discourse, *cf.* Luke 17. 24 and 37.) Then will follow signs in Heaven, and the ' Coming of the Son of Man.' And then he will send out his messengers (' with a great sound of the trumpet ' only in Matthew) and gather his elect from the four corners of Heaven by their preaching. The signs I have mentioned will precede the destruction of Jerusalem as surely as the fig tree buds before summer. It will all be in the lifetime of men now grown up ; my words are certain truth." Then follows in Mark and Matthew the verse about the " ignorance of that day " which would seem to belong, more probably, to some other discourse which really did deal with the end of the world ; very likely the discourse which is separately recorded by S. Luke, though added here by S. Matthew, about the days of Noah and the days of Lot. This other discourse seems to have included fragments which S. Matthew has worked into the text here to make his cento complete, just as he worked in others to complete the cento of 10. 6 *sqq.* Verse 14, for example, referred to above, which prophesies the preaching of the Gospel to the whole world before the end comes, may (if it be not a " doublet " as suggested above) come from that discourse ; and this would suggest the possibility that the discourse itself took place after the Resurrection, and was identical with that recorded in the Acts of the Apostles (1. 6 *sqq.*), which contains a question as to the date of the " restoration of the kingdom to Israel," with the reply that the Father has put the times and seasons in his own power (? = Mark 13. 32,

Matt. 24. 36),* and that witness must first be borne in all the world (?=Matt. 24. 14, where the word "witness" is also used). But if my view is right, that the kernel of the great "eschatological" passage dealt only with the Destruction of Jerusalem, it follows that the other discourse (or discourses) as to the end of the world has been so scattered about that no clear evidence as to its structure can now be obtainable.

I can conceive that it may here be objected: "You are hardly showing yourself true to your principles. You have deliberately refused to base your faith on hypothesis, and here are you advancing a hypothesis, and a remarkably fanciful one at that, in order to vindicate the omniscience of our Saviour. You have accused all the Evangelists of putting sayings of our Lord out of their true place, and S. Matthew (at least) of putting eschatological colouring into what was not really an eschatological discourse. Does not your position really rest upon hypothesis, and give up the Bible?" To which I would reply, that the hypothesis advanced is throughout advanced as an *argumentum ad hominem;* it is not necessarily the right one, but it seems to me at least as good as other hypotheses which have been adduced in a contrary sense, and I recommend it merely to the attention of Biblical critics. But my belief in the omniscience of our Saviour does not rest on this or on any other hypothesis: it rests upon a received doctrine, or body of doctrine, of the Church, which holds that our Lord was omniscient; and I believe, consequently, that any texts which appear to contradict this a priori knowledge of mine must be susceptible of a different interpretation, whether it be the interpretation here given or another.

I have not urged that S. Matthew falsified the account,

* Is it too much to suggest, that the difficult text in SS. Matthew and Mark is simply an echo of some popular exaggeration of the logion recorded in Acts 1.?

but simply that he was in possession of certain sayings of our Lord which he thought would fit in here. They had to be preserved at any cost. That the Holy Spirit should not have overruled providentially this arrangement of his Gospel is really not surprising, since the passage in question is not of permanent central importance in the scheme of Christian doctrine, except when it is used in a certain way by critics who are applying critical methods in what I take to be a wrong spirit. That S. Matthew did not arrange his material with a view to strict chronology seems to me a very probable view, if only by comparison of his tenth chapter. Here the main body of sayings corresponds to Mark 6. 6 *sqq.*, Luke 9. *init.*; but (apparently) Matthew 5. 13 = Luke 10. 6, *v.* 15 = Luke 10. 12, *v.* 16 = Luke 10. 3, *vv.* 17–23 = Mark 13. 9, Luke 12. 11, and 21. 12, *v.* 23 is only Matthæan, *v.* 24 = John 13. 16, *v.* 25 is only Matthæan, *v.* 26 = Mark 4. 22, Luke 12. 2, and the next five verses correspond with the same Lucan passage, *vv.* 32, 33 = Mark 8. 38, *vv.* 34–37 = Luke 12. 49, *v.* 37 = Luke 14. 26, *vv.* 38, 39 = Mark 3. 35, and parallels, *v.* 40 = Mark 9. 37, and *v.* 42 = Mark 9. 41. And it seems very likely that the other two Synoptists, though they possibly aimed at more correct chronological order, often had to deal in the same way with isolated sayings of which they could only guess the context. That the cento principle has been at work in the chapter this appendix has been considering seems almost certain, if we suppose the cento system was used at all.

CHAPTER VII

THE GREAT OMISSION

IT may perhaps appear that, in these latter considerations, we have travelled rather far from the ground marked out for us by "Foundations." But in fact this is only a superficial view. For the assumption that the knowledge of Jesus of Nazareth was only human knowledge—unusual perhaps, but still human—does in fact underlie a great deal of the language that is most characteristic, and at the same time most repellent to certain pious ears, in a book such as that we are engaged in criticizing. "The growth of the Personality" of Jesus (p. 98), "to One who looked at life like this, it might not seem so great a paradox" (p. 99), "It is even possible that the effects of a long hunger combined with the nervous reaction of the stirring experience of his Call actually caused his inner conflict to become visualized in the form related" in the story of the Temptation (p. 100), "it was along the lines of that conception that he interpreted his office" (p. 101), "His obvious duty" (p. 102), "God was ever present to our Lord's mind as the one great reality" (p. 103), "The specific message which at that crisis our Lord felt called to preach" (p. 104), "the simplicity and directness of his whole outlook on life" (p. 105)—on almost every page of Mr. Streeter's

Essay (and it does not stand alone in this respect) we come across these passages which seem to treat our Saviour's mind as if it were possible to class it with purely human intellects. What impression such phrases leave on others, I cannot say; for myself I think I would sooner have the most outspoken denial of the Resurrection, than this continual attitude of "Christological" analysis. To many of us the historical method, as applied to Jesus of Nazareth, will always seem, to put it plainly, lacking in reverence.

And this difference of tone or temperament—for I conceive, in accordance with the canon laid down in my preface, that such differences are in some ways more psychological than speculative—is not due merely to the fact that Mr. Streeter approaches the Gospel story by way of scientific investigation, while I approach it with my mind made up as to what I must expect to find there. Is it not possibly attributable to the fact, that I begin the story of our Lord's life with the first chapters of SS. Matthew and Luke, whereas all the authors of "Foundations" begin it with the first chapter of S. Mark? I confess that I feel a certain sense of uneasiness about a work which is, to all appearance, a complete setting forth of the faith in the light of modern research, whose index contains no reference to any of the following words—Annunciation, Bethlehem, Birth, Joseph, Mary, Nativity, or Virgin. If all the Gospels began, as S. Mark's begins, with the account of John Baptist's preaching and the baptism of Jesus, then it is true we might form a perfectly adequate scheme of Redemptive theology, and never ask for more. But when there is, *prima facie* at any rate, an account of a miraculous Birth and Childhood in two of the

three Synoptists, and when that account has been the subject of hot debate among theologians, and great searching of heart for ordinary laymen, then it does seem reasonable to expect that the compilers of any general work of theology will give at least a passing reference to the topic, if only for the purpose of assuring us whether they regard the account as worthy of credence—nay, even whether they regard the account, if true, as possessed of some theological importance. It is, of course, a conceivable view, that the authors of the book regarded the alleged Virgin Birth of our Lord as a doctrine so generally admitted, so far beyond all doubt or possibility of denial, that they held it unnecessary to canvass the question. I wish I could feel certain that this was the case. I do not suggest the reverse point of view, that they held it to be so notorious a fabrication as to be unworthy of serious discussion. I can well believe that they omitted such discussion, on the ground that their own points about the truth of the Divine Revelation could be made clear without reference to it: but is it really possible to "burke" the whole subject, and yet leave the issue as to our Lord's human nature unaffected one way or the other?

If all you know of the origin of Jesus of Nazareth is the bare names of his family, as recorded by S. Mark; if he springs, full-armed, on to the stage of his Life's Work as a man who has been "converted" by a strange psychical experience following on his baptism; then I suppose it is the right, if not the duty, of the critic to estimate the influences on such a man's character of his environment, his times, his acquaintance with the Hebrew Prophets, his sym-

pathy with Messianic ideals. But IF it is true that the birth of this man was foretold by the visit of an Angel, that his Mother was hailed by her cousin as blessed among women, and the mother of her Lord; if the birth itself was beyond the use of nature, since the Mother remained a virgin in her childbearing; if his coming into the world was of such moment, that the stars in heaven could not keep the secret, and the Angels burst into song over the fields of Bethlehem; if his infancy was protected by continual divine warnings and visions of the night; then it does seem to me that any sense of the fitness of things forbids such an analytical treatment. It is possible, of course, to suspend judgment about such things—in other words, to put them outside your practical considerations, but if you have a lively faith in them, your whole attitude becomes different. You cannot think of the mind of such a man as "looking at life" or "interpreting his office" in this way or in that: and to say that God was ever present to his mind as the one great reality, is something akin to describing the Judgment Day as a fine sight.

"But," it may be urged, "at least S. Paul's Epistles and S. Mark's Gospel seem to have been written on the principle that the history of the Infancy was somehow negligible. Their omission of it might well be taken to show that they had never heard of it; but we will not press that: we will be content to urge that they knew about it, but felt that it was confusing to the main issues of the Christian Revelation, if any stress should be laid on it. Are we not within our rights in taking the line which our earliest authorities took about it?"

Now, there are, as I conceive, four possible explanations of this phenomenon. Firstly, that the events recorded of our Saviour's early life did not happen—any of them. Secondly, that they did happen, but SS. Paul and Mark did not know about them. Thirdly, that SS. Paul and Mark did know about them, but thought them unimportant. Fourthly, that they did know about them, and did not think them unimportant, but had some special reason for omitting them. Now, on my own a priori grounds, I cannot bring myself to believe that the first of these explanations is the true one. The passages in question in S. Matthew and S. Luke have been allowed by the Providence of God to retain their place in the sacred text, whereas most of the "Stories of the Infancy" now in existence claim no more than a shadowy Apocryphal or Traditional authority. Further, the Holy Spirit, who guides, as we must believe, the decisions of his Church, has suffered them to be the basis of a vast amount of Christian theology: they have been allowed to create that attitude towards the life of our Lord which I described above, as shrinking from psychological analysis—that attitude, if the events did not happen, is a thoroughly false and mischievous attitude. This is the true, because the a priori, reason for believing in the Virgin Birth, with its corollaries.

The corroborative, a posteriori, reasons for believing in it, are too well known to need repetition. The comparatively early date (becoming more and more recognized) of the two Gospels which record it; the impossibility of proving any difference of style or manner in the passages concerned, as com-

pared with the rest of the respective Gospels; the fact that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, when declaring Melchizedek to have been made like unto the Son of God, emphasizes the fact (which he certainly seems to conceive literally here) that Melchizedek was without father or mother: all these contribute their quota of the argument. I would add that to my own mind considerable weight seems to attach to a passage which I have referred to in a previous chapter, namely, that when it was infinitely probable that the Jews should say, Is not this the son of Joseph?—so probable, that S. Luke actually represents them as saying it—S. Mark, our best authority, goes out of his way to report the question as, Is not this the son of Mary? I am bound to say, that if some prejudice against the miraculous made it impossible for me to accept the story of the Virgin Birth, I should on the strength of this passage (with its modification in Matthew and Luke), together with the apologetic sound of what I should then consider to be the spurious prefaces of the First and Third Gospels, be bound to conclude, not that Jesus was the son of Joseph, but that he was born out of wedlock. And the implications of this view as to the character of Mary would make it seem at least strange, that our Lord should have chosen her to be his Mother.

The other a posteriori arguments in favour of the old-fashioned view—apart of course from the "convenience to reason" of the idea that he who was to be the Saviour of the Jews would not put himself in a position where he would have to say, "In sin hath my Mother conceived me"—are arguments from silence, and therefore cannot be pressed, e.g.

the text in Galatians 4., where he is described as γενόμενος, not τεκόμενος, of a woman. But it is well to observe that the arguments against the Virgin Birth—except on the old anti-miraculous hypothesis—are entirely inconclusive. There are only two of them: one textual, that part of Luke 1. 34 might be an interpolation; and the other anthropological, that many other religions have the idea of a Virgin Birth in their systems. The first, which is in itself purely arbitrary, offers no explanation of Matthew 18. *sqq.*, and is further rendered useless by the fact that among our very numerous and very early texts of the Gospel none omits the phrase. The second, like most anthropological arguments, conceals a hopeless logical flaw. Put into logical form, it would run thus:

All false religions record a Virgin Birth,
Christianity records a Virgin Birth,
Therefore Christianity is a false religion.

In a year's experience of Passmen, I have never found a logician incomplete enough to be duped by so glaring an undistributed middle as that.

The first explanation, therefore, of the silence of certain of the sacred writers about the Virgin Birth—namely, that it never occurred at all—is unsatisfactory. But we have to find some explanation. Another reason suggested was that S. Mark and S. Paul knew the facts, but thought, as some theologians think, that they were unimportant. Now, this may possibly be true in a modified sense of S. Paul. He appeals very little to the earthly life of our Saviour, and where he does appeal to it, it is chiefly by way of evidence. A miracle such as that now in question, which only Mary herself could attest, would be of no

controversial value. And—let us admit it in all honesty—there is no such thing as a "Christology" in S. Paul. The facts, for him, were too self-evident to need theological analysis; the crowning miracle of the Resurrection was sufficient in the way of credentials. Had he ever set out to combat any of the heresies which attacked the Christian doctrine of the Person of our Saviour, it would have been a different matter; as it was, the conditions under which Jesus Christ came into the world were for him unimportant, in the sense that they were irrelevant to his main subject. Possibly, however, this is not the whole reason.

And certainly it is not easy to apply the same principle of explanation to S. Mark. He does seem to be giving us a complete biography, in the sense that he has no particular axe to grind, no special Christian verity to defend from assault. He is writing for people who only know the skeleton of the life of Jesus, as attested by the preaching of the Apostles, and are now athirst for details. Surely it was natural that he should have satisfied their curiosity—could they have been other than curious?—about the early years of him whom they had learnt to worship as God.

Are we then to assume that, since the events really happened, and S. Mark did not think them unimportant, and yet did not mention them, he was, at the time when he wrote his Gospel, actually in ignorance of the facts themselves? I have suggested that one text at least in his Gospel implies the knowledge. And if, as the Acts seem to indicate, Mary herself lived in close touch with the early Christian community, and S. Mark's own house was a

habitual meeting-place for it, then we can hardly believe that he, of all the Evangelists, was so little in her confidence.

It only remains to suppose that there were special reasons why S. Mark (and possibly also S. Paul), while realizing the truth and the importance of the facts about our Saviour's earliest years, felt bound to secrecy. And I cannot see what difficulty there is in supposing that Mary herself was reluctant to see her name figure so prominently in the narrative. We are so apt to forget that Mary was a real person. Biography affords numerous parallels of life-histories which could not be completed while relatives of the subject still survived. What is more probable, than that Mary should resent the idea of being made a central figure in the Church, of receiving the homage of those who owed their eternal salvation to her Son ? In her later life (so I would read the riddle conjecturally), when the Gospel came to be written for those who were far off and could not visit her personally, she relaxed the prohibition, so far as was necessary for the full presentment of the Gospel narrative ; on certain other pictures, which concerned herself more exclusively, she still demanded silence. Only after her death was the world allowed to know of that mysterious utterance at the wedding-feast, and the scene at the Cross to which it pointed forward, when her Son left his Church under her motherly protection.

Now if this is the true explanation of the silence of our earliest authorities, or rather, even if it is an arguable view, it does seem to me that no theology of the Incarnation can afford, on the ground of that silence, to neglect the narratives of our Saviour's

infancy in doing so. More especially so, in a work which devotes one chapter to the Historic Christ, another to the Interpretation of the Christ, and a third to the Divinity of Christ, and yet manages to leave the Atonement for separate treatment.

It does make a difference. For, as I conceive, the "modern" view of the Incarnation is thoroughly Kenotic. Jesus wished to be exactly like us; he wished to be limited in power and in knowledge, like us, and even (to judge from one indication) to be capable, like us, of sinning. Now, if that were so, would it not by force of analogy follow almost inevitably that he should wish to come into the world by the ordinary process of a natural birth? And since (according to the Gospel narrative) the process of self-humiliation was not so complete that he could consent to be born of human wedlock, is it not clear that Incarnation *does not* involve entire self-limitation to human conditions, and therefore that our a priori expectations, for what they are worth, would be against any large limitation, whether of his Divine knowledge, or of his Divine power? The argument is perhaps rather finely drawn, and certainly not in the strict sense cogent. But I must say that, whereas a normal human birth would naturally create the presumption of an ordinary human consciousness in him who was so born, a supra-normal birth, to my mind, equally creates the presumption of something more than an ordinary human consciousness. And if the presumption lies in this direction, then any theory which contradicts this presumption demands, surely, a rather more critical marshalling and investigating of the data with regard to our Lord's incarnate Nature than

the authors of "Foundations" seem to have felt it necessary to institute.

Logically, then, the doctrine of the Virgin Birth creates a presumption against an extreme Kenotic view of the Incarnation. As a matter of psychology, anyone who keeps that doctrine in the forefront of his thought, is liable to approach the facts of the Incarnation in a less "critical" spirit than one who, for reasons unexpressed, leaves that doctrine out of sight. Perhaps it may seem out of place for a work which professes to be of purely abstract theological interest to descend to questions of contemporary polemics. But I cannot resist making an appeal here, to all those who are attached to "old-fashioned" views of the person of our Saviour, to reflect whether such views are afforded a proper devotional safeguard, so long as praises of, or prayers to, the Mother of God, are either energetically repudiated or thrust away into a corner. Ever since the Nestorian controversy, the divine mystery of the Theotokos has been regarded with special honour, in protest against incomplete theories of the Incarnation. Is it not, then, somewhat pathetic, that dignitaries of the Church, whose orthodoxy no one calls in question, should pass over with a sigh or a shake of the head theological utterances which assert our Lord to be Divine only in a very limited sense, while the unfortunate parish priest who recites the Hail Mary, or sings the *Ave maris stella*, is immediately denounced, perhaps even proceeded against, as a wolf in the fold? Does not the unanimous discountenancing, in official circles, of devotions to Mary give some handle to those who, if pressed to carry out the implications of their

views, would be forced, in honesty, to state that Jesus of Nazareth was a love-child? It may be true, that the first impetus towards "Mariolatry" was given by the reaction from Nestorian views, and is therefore not strictly primitive; but this, surely, is only incidental to the fact that the Nestorian heresy happened to arise at a later period than others, which did not find their stumbling-block in the one Person of our Lord. Since that date, neither East nor West has been behindhand in showing honour to the Mother of God: are we well advised, at the present theological juncture, to dissociate ourselves from East and West in trying to stamp out the cultus? We might do well, before thus committing ourselves, to weigh the words of the Venerable Bede: "Et nos igitur, his contra Eutychen dictis, extollamus vocem cum Ecclesia catholica, cuius haec mulier typum gessit, extollamus et mentem de medio turbarum, dicamusque Salvatori, Beatus venter qui te portavit, et ubera quae suxisti. Vere enim beata parens, quae, sicut quidam ait, Enixa est puerpera Regem, Qui caelum terramque tenet per saecula."

CHAPTER VIII

RESTATEMENT IN THE BALANCES—THE INCARNATION

SO far, it will be seen, in examining modern ideas of the Incarnation, I have been quite ready to admit that the picture drawn of Jesus of Nazareth is one full of moral beauty, and such as might easily excite feelings of devotion in the most unsympathetic reader. My difficulty has been to discover precisely what it is that the authors of "Foundations" mean when they refer to Jesus of Nazareth as "Divine." And so far as I am able to interpret their meaning, the suggestion has been that the Jesus of modern Criticism, with his limited powers, his limited knowledge, his gradually developing personality, his partial and changing apprehension of the purpose for which he has been sent into the world, his liability to the ordinary temptations of mankind, is somehow God. And frankly, the more I look at it, the less sense does it seem to present. Grant that (as Mr. Temple seems to suggest, p. 247) the distinction between the Divine and the Human may as well be represented as one of degree, rather than one of kind; if we are so to conceive the facts, it becomes of the very first importance to decide what degree constitutes Divinity, and what Humanity. For

on the face of it, a man may be two things at the same time if they differ in kind, e.g. a poet and a mathematician. But the same is not true of a difference of degree; the same man cannot be a bantam-weight and a heavy-weight boxer. Now, if it is the nature of God to be good, like Man, only more so; and to be powerful, like Man, only more so; and wise, like Man, only more so; then a character which is conceived as good up to a certain point must be either too good to be Man, or not good enough to be God—the idea of representing the God-Man as one who is half-way in degree between God and Man is obviously unsatisfactory. And the same will be true of the other qualities. If then God is more powerful than Man, but became less powerful by condescending to the human level in the Incarnation; wiser than Man, but limited his knowledge to a human extent; God became Man in the Incarnation, but did he remain God? If the difference between the Divine and the Human is one of degree only, and the Incarnation involved a limitation of the degree, then Jesus was surely not God. He had been God: he became God again at his Ascension: but he was not God. Ice which has thawed and then frozen again is ice once more, but it was not ice between the thaw and the frost.

If we represent the difference as one of kind, I confess I have still my difficulties about the "Kenotic" position. I should admit, for myself, that there was a difference of kind between what is powerful, but limited in power, and what is omnipotent: between what is wise, but limited in knowledge, and what is omniscient: above all, between one who does not sin, like Mary, and one who cannot sin, like Christ.

When I speak of the Incarnation, I mean that there was a mysterious fusion between a divine and a human nature, a divine nature which was omnipotent, omniscient, and incapable of sinning, and something else which, apart from that fusion, was not omnipotent, or omniscient, or incapable of sin (though capable of not sinning). He who was thus Incarnate was God, in virtue of his omnipotence, omniscience, and impeccability: he was also man, in virtue of a human nature which was, *ex se*, subject to limitation in all three directions. Since, however, the two natures inhere in one subject, the limitations are *de facto* always transcended by the Personality as a whole, though by a deliberate and continual act of will the divine qualities are sometimes held in abeyance, as I suggested in a previous chapter.

But according to the Kenotic theory, the Word in being made Man is undeified, so to speak; for he loses the omnipotence and the omniscience which distinguished him, as God, from Man. Whether or no he loses formal impeccability at the same time, I find it very difficult to see. But clearly Mr. Rawlinson at any rate conceives his sinlessness as a sinlessness abstractly possible in a mere man, and therefore not specifically divine. In virtue of what mark of recognition, if this be so, can we assert that Jesus of Nazareth was God as well as Man?

It is very characteristic of modern thought, that "Foundations" should discuss the historic Christ without first producing any theory as to how God may be recognized, or what modifications must be introduced into our view of the evidence according as he was or was not God, and should leave it for a later chapter to discuss the Divinity of Christ.

This is really false to the best methods of evidence. If the murderer in some mysterious crime has left proofs of gigantic physical strength, you cannot reasonably begin to build up a case against A or B until you have discovered whether A or B is so physically constituted as to have been capable of producing the effect. And if you are examining a set of recorded facts, in which a presumption of miracle plays a large part, it is surely at least natural to find out first of all whether and in what sense the Person of whom the stories are related was human or Divine, thus making sure of what you regard as possible occurrences before you try to determine what actually occurred.

The reason of the defect is a psychological one ; it rests upon a personal horror of presupposition which obsesses the mind of the modern critic, quite apart from the question whether presuppositions are in place in the discussion he has taken in hand. Thus we get the impression that the authors are asking us : " This Person, who was God or Man or something of that kind, is alleged to have risen from the dead with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature ; can you really believe that ? " To which our natural reply is, " When you have told me whether, on other grounds of consideration, he was God or Man ; and further, since I perceive that restatements are in the air, when you have told me what you mean by God, and what by Man ; then I shall have some principles of criticism to go upon, then I shall be able to investigate the actual in the light of the possible." Instead of which, an honest zeal for truth prompts our authors to examine first what happened ; and their piety comes

in as an afterthought to prove that the Person who did (or did not do) these things was really Divine.

But the first afterthought is not Mr. Temple's. It is Mr. Streeter's. The final paragraph of the chapter entitled "The Historic Christ," is intended to vindicate the truth (without explaining the manner) of our Lord's Divinity. "Vicisti Galilæe" is the text of it. For myself, I confess to an extreme horror of such vindications. "Art thou the Christ? —I am, replied the Prisoner.—Blasphemy, pronounced the Priest. And History has judged between them." But what exactly has History proved? What has it proved about Christ, which it has not proved about Buddha? That is, that he founded a Religion which could make a great difference (only Western arrogance can say "for the better" in the case of our Saviour) to a large number of peoples, and produced lives of remarkable sanctity and self-sacrifice? History has proved that about Buddha, but in spite of the millions who profess his system, because I believe that system to be founded upon a lie, I will, God helping me, go about the world protesting against it and pointing out its weaknesses and keeping others away from its influence, in so far at any rate as it represents anything more than the common moral sentiment of mankind. And if I did not believe in Christianity, I would do the same by Christianity. For me, the appeal to numbers is no better than a cowardly appeal.

But in any case, what has history proved? What is the good of saying that civilization has acclaimed Christ as Divine, when you have not yet come to any conclusion as to what you, or civilization at

large, meant by Divinity ? For all this we have to wait till the ratifying Chapter V, in which Mr. Temple deals with the problem.

I feel a very genuine delicacy about the examining of it. For all the interest I have ever felt, and all the grounding I have ever had, in metaphysical theology, comes entirely from Mr. Temple, for whose philosophical powers I have, for the last eight years, entertained a very high degree of respect. But because I think that he ultimately commits himself to precisely that philosophical error for which he reprehends the early Greek Fathers, I must needs review, with every consciousness of my inadequacy to the task, the course of his argument on the subject.

I will leave out of sight what he says about the mediæval Latin theologians, since it seems to belong more properly to the discussion of the problem of the Atonement. Briefly, his criticism of the Greek theologians is as follows. They lived in an atmosphere of developed Aristotelian philosophy, in which Substance or rather Essence (*ousia*) was conceived, not as a Universal existing only IN its particulars, as modern philosophers would probably regard it, but as something existing independently, in its own right, and by entering into combination with particulars making them what they are. Thus (to use Mr. Temple's own illustration) greenness has a perfectly independent existence of its own, but is known to us in so far as it is manifested in green grass, green leaves, green waves, etc. Therefore (since Godhead was a "substance" of this kind) a Greek theologian of the period could say that in the Blessed Trinity there are three Persons, or separate Manifestations,

in which a single Substance (that of Godhead) inhered; and yet defend themselves against the charge of doing away with the reality of the Oneness of God, because the Substance was one, and the Substance was a real thing, existing in its own right. Whereas for us to say that the Unity of the Godhead is a Universal which inheres in three separate Particulars, would be mere philosophical juggling with doctrine, because we conceive the Universal, whether it be greenness or Divinity, as existing not in its own right, but only in the particulars which are the manifestation of it. Similarly, the "substance" of Divinity or Godhead could inhere in a particular Man, Jesus Christ, in whom another "substance," Humanity, also inhered at the same time. Christ is therefore Dual in regard to the Substances which inhere in his Nature, but One in so far as he is a single Particular in which both those Substances inhere. Godhead and Manhood co-exist in Christ, as surely as yellowness and roundness co-exist in an orange. And so they would pluck the heart out of our mystery.

I am afraid my reading does not go far enough to allow me to judge whether that is what the Greek Fathers really meant. For myself, I do not think I mean by the use of the term "substance" as a theological term, merely an abstract Universal, that is to say, a Universal treated in abstraction from its particulars. I apply it to a supra-rational reality, which in the language of human thought can best be described by an analogy drawn from "substance" on the metaphysical plane. But however the truth stands, it is clear what accusation Mr. Temple is bringing against Greek Patristic

writers, viz. that they institute a distinction which can be made in thought, but not in fact, between the Universal and the Particular in which it inheres, and then apply it to theology as if it were a valid distinction in fact.

What then is Mr. Temple's own explanation? This apparently: that the problem of the Divinity and Humanity of Christ is a problem of the Divine and the Human Will. Christ's will as a subjective function was the will of a man, it was a capacity for willing which existed in Jesus of Nazareth. But Christ's Will was the Will of the Father, for he never had a desire which was out of accord with the Father's desire. Thus the Will of Christ was both Human and Divine at one and the same moment; human because that which willed was a human will, Divine because that which was willed was the Divine Will. We thus seem to have successfully substituted the category of will for the category of substance.

Now, in cases like this we have to walk warily amid the pitfalls of language, more especially, perhaps, as it is the English language. It is true that a convinced Ulsterman can say that so far as politics goes, his will is the will of Sir Edward Carson. He can also say, that he is of the same mind, or even, that he is of one mind, with Sir Edward Carson, in this matter. But he does not mean that by some curious process of hypnotism or thought-transference, Sir Edward Carson's will, as a subjective function, has insinuated itself into the grey matter of his (the Ulsterman's) brain. He means that the object of his will, the thing which he wills, is the same thing which Sir Edward Carson wills. It is not a

case of one will, in strict language, but of two wills which are willing the same thing. He is not really of one mind, nor of the same mind, as Sir Edward Carson, but of a like, of a similar mind ; it is not a case of one thinking mind, but of two thinking minds which resemble one another in respect of the thoughts which they think.

" But," it will be objected, " surely you are pressing distinctions too much. Surely a will must be a will which wills something ; a will without a content can exist only in thought. Are you not building on an abstract distinction between the form and the content of a will ? " Of course I am ; that is precisely what I wish to do. I wish to show that Mr. Temple's distinction between the human will and the divine will in our Saviour is a distinction between the content and the form of a single will, and is therefore a distinction only in thought. The theory does not really attribute to Jesus two wills, a human and a divine, but a single will (which I confess I should call a human one) viewed successively from two different standpoints, (1) that which wills, and (2) that which is willed ; aspects separable in thought of something that comes to us in experience whole and undivided, and is called the " Will " of a Person.

Now, if the fault of the Greek theologians is that they institute a distinction which can be made in thought, but not in fact, between the Universal and the Particular in which it inheres, and then apply it to theology as if it were a valid distinction in fact ; what shall be said of Mr. Temple, who institutes a distinction which can be made in thought, but not in fact, between the form and the content of a will,

and then applies it to theology as if it were a valid distinction in fact? How is his system more excellent than theirs? For myself, I feel bound to the belief that in Jesus of Nazareth two separate functions of willing, one a human function, and the other a divine function, were conjoined by a process which metaphysics are unable to explain or even express. And my general view of this and other attempts in "Foundations" to determine what were the constitutive elements of Divinity in Jesus of Nazareth, is that if nothing further is necessary to justify us in calling a Person divine, then I can no longer be content to withhold the title of "divine" from the Virgin Mary.

Of course, the view of the Person of our Lord which I have just advanced as orthodox, will come in for severe criticism from the "Foundations" point of view, as suggesting that he took, not human nature, but *a* human nature, upon him. His humanity must, I shall be told, be regarded as "inclusive," he took our Nature upon him, not merely in the sense that he took on him a nature like ours, but that he took the whole of human nature into himself; it was not humanity as an abstract universal, but humanity as a concrete spiritual fact, which we find inhering in him. Now, whatever be the truth or the helpfulness of such a position, I cannot see that we make it in any way easier to give any account of it, if we take refuge in the category of "Will"—we simply repeat the same error. Mr. Temple rightly discards the notion (which he attributes to the Greek Fathers) that in taking "Humanity" into himself, in the sense of making it appear in himself as a Universal

inhering in a Particular, he took all mankind into himself after the manner of substance. For, after all, every man has the whole "substance" of humanity in himself—how else could he be man?—therefore in a sense every man takes human nature into himself at his birth. And that Jesus was the perfect Man, that is, the perfect manifestation of the Idea, does not necessarily mean that humanity dwelt in him *more* than it dwells in us, but only that it dwelt in him more clearly, with less alloy of alien substances. But Mr. Temple's own explanation seems to be simply a repetition of that already mentioned and already criticized, above. Just as, for him, the union of the Son with the Father consists in the identity of content between Christ's Will and his Father's, so our union with Christ consists in the identity of content between our will and his Will (p. 253 *sqq.*): "Christ's inclusiveness is not substantial but spiritual, not quantitative but qualitative—that is, it is accomplished through personal influence." But the assimilation of our wills to Christ's, carried however far, is still a similarity only, and comes no nearer to being an identity: this Mr. Temple recognizes on p. 255, "*qua* centre of consciousness each is himself, and no other," so that as a metaphysical restatement of the old Greek position the explanation seems to break down. Whatever we mean by saying that the Humanity which Christ took upon him at the Incarnation was "inclusive," the term "identification of wills" states either too little or too much: too much, if we imply by it the literal absorption of our faculties of willing: too little, if we mean simply that we are united with Christ in virtue of an abstraction—for the content of a will is nothing else.

There is, of course, a mystical union between Christ and the true believer. But the language of this mystical union, whether found in Holy Scripture or in the experiences of the mystics, clearly must not be pressed to make union synonymous with identification. I am the Vine, ye are the branches—Christ is one thing, and we are another, only there is a uniting something which is communicated from him to us, from us to him, as the sap circulates between the branches and the parent trunk. Christian mysticism claims its superiority over Oriental mysticism precisely because its ultimate goal is that of complete harmony between two different persons, not the absorption of one personality into another. The goal of ordinary human love (in spite of the poets' language) is not identity, but correspondence. And it is in complete correspondence between his heart and the Heart of Jesus that the Christian looks forward to that full fruition of love, which is his hope for eternity. Mystical union is not the drop falling into the stream, but the key fitting into the lock.

Perhaps it may be well to pause here, and to review the extent of the difference which appears between the old-fashioned view, which starts from presuppositions, and the modern view which deliberately discards presuppositions, and tries to start from the bare facts. It will be perceived, I think, that this difference in approaching the subject, which presented itself at first as a mere difference of method—the one party delimiting for itself, at the outset of a theological enquiry, the bounds within which speculation was permissible, the other party getting theories out of the facts, verifying the theories,

and afterwards showing them to be in accordance with ecclesiastical tradition—this difference of process has somehow led to a rather remarkably wide divergence in the result.

A priori, we deduce from a certain view of the Atonement (to be discussed in contrast to more modern views in the next chapter) that the world could only be redeemed by one who was both God and Man. Since God is omnipotent, omniscient, impeccable, Jesus of Nazareth must have been so, in order to be God : since Man has a nature which is not of its own right omnipotent, omniscient, or impeccable, Jesus of Nazareth must have had such a nature, neither omnipotent, nor omniscient, nor impeccable, *as of its own right.* (Incidentally also, since it is part of God's nature to be omnipresent, the Word did not leave his Father's side, although he became Man on earth.) These two natures have clearly to be combined in a single centre of consciousness, otherwise he would be two Christs, not one. This union of natures must therefore have taken place : how, we do not know, and are not meant to. Therefore, although fully Man, Jesus of Nazareth must have had present to him, in virtue of his Divinity, unlimited sources of knowledge and powers of operation whenever he liked to use them. Therefore, when we hear that he " could " do no mighty works, the impossibility must clearly have been, not physical, but moral ; it lies in the fact that such action would have been contrary to his own method of working. When he appears to be limited by human conditions, or human imperfection of knowledge, this must be explained as a voluntary refusal to use powers he possessed, not any real limitation

of his Divinity. He could have turned the stable at Bethlehem into a palace; he could have called down fire on Pilate's legionaries, *if he had wanted to*. Further, because he was without sin in the flesh, his human body, though it suffered physical death for our sakes, could not be held by death and undergo decomposition according to the ordinary laws of nature; hence the Resurrection involves the disappearance of the actual physical particles from the tomb, however the Risen Body was glorified in the change.

That is, as I conceive, the traditional view of the Incarnation, so far as the Church possesses a coherent body of doctrine on the subject—individual writers, who had no great sense of responsibility for their words, have no doubt here and there used expressions which, upon fuller examination, they would have seen to involve contradictions with this main deposit, but that does not affect its general position. To this traditional view the Church of England is, by implication at any rate, committed quite as deeply as any other body of Christian believers in the world.

On the other hand, the modern doctrine contends simply that there was a historical figure, Jesus of Nazareth, who, at the age of about thirty, experienced an inward prophetic "call" as the result of his Baptism by John the Baptist. That his mind was so far dominated by ideas of the coming of the Messiah in judgment (derived from Jewish apocalyptic literature) that he set about preaching the coming of that kingdom, and at some stage, whether at this time or later, came to identify himself with the Messiah. That, as time went on, he came to see the necessity of crowning his ministry by courting

martyrdom; this would give him an opportunity of "showing up" sin to the sinner in a true light. Martyrdom was not denied him. After his death, his form appeared to his disciples, perhaps an astral, perhaps a "Resurrection" body: and under the influence of this experience they founded a Church, in which they gradually worked out a doctrine of the nature, person, and work of him who had meant so much to their lives. The Church has claimed, and history has ratified the claim, that he was divine—in what sense? Clearly not that of impeccability, omnipotence, or omniscience; we have evidence to disprove all that; besides, his work would seem unreal, if he were thus not fully man. But he was divine, for his will, moulded into complete accord with the will of his heavenly Father, was divine in its content. He is therefore both God and Man.

I hope this is not a misrepresentation of the view put forward in "Foundations." In putting it forward, and contrasting it with what I take to be the traditional view, I am not indulging in the pleasures of a heresy-hunt; I am not suggesting that it is impossible for persons holding such views to justify their subscription to the XXXIX Articles of Religion. It is quite *arguable* that this view is the right one; and it is highly probable that with a devotional superstructure supplied on the lines suggested in the book itself, a very real, and even a specifically Christian form of piety may be built up on it. All I am concerned to ask, is whether the second view as just stated can in honest logic be called a "restatement" of the former? Whether any sensible man would hold that the formularies which

have enshrined the one can be preserved, without alteration, as an adequate expression of the other? I can quite see how people want a New Theology in the Church of England; what I cannot see is why they scruple to call it new.

CHAPTER IX

RESTATEMENT IN THE BALANCES—THE ATONEMENT

OF all the chapters in "Foundations," none is more carefully arranged or more fully tabulated by headings than Mr. Moberly's treatment of the Atonement. We may well be grateful for this, for the subject, when fully treated, is a complicated one, and its phraseology is apt to be elusive. The statement which this chapter contains of the issues between Liberal and Conservative theologians allows the author to put his own views in a nutshell. The death of Jesus was necessary, we are told in the abstract, for the following reasons :

"(1) Historically, it was deliberately incurred in the fulfilment of his mission, and martyrdom has always power ;

"(2) It was an example of vicarious penitence. (Vicarious penitence is not only possible, but is the most 'saving' thing in experience, for it 'shows up' sin to the sinner) ;

"(3) It was intrinsically necessary, both in general to the perfecting of the human character of Jesus, and specifically to his final conquest of sin."

What follows is irrelevant to the main contention of this chapter, for it is concerned only to show

that the work of Jesus Christ was directly the work of God, and therefore the Atonement is a Divine Act: it does not go to elucidate any further the *manner* in which the Atonement exercises a regenerative effect on the world, it only shows why this particular example of Vicarious Penitence is not limited in its scope to the needs of one or two sinners, the sinners who actually crucified Christ, but is applicable to the sins of the whole world. With this point we have no quarrel: what concerns us is to examine whether the manner in which the Atonement becomes efficacious is fully and adequately stated in the quotation just made.

I suppose that sections (1) and (3) of that quotation are points which the most orthodox theologian would not in any way doubt or under-estimate, while it is clear that Mr. Moberly himself does not regard them as adequate to the full exposition of the doctrine. The section marked (2) is clearly the important one; and I must draw attention at once to a single note of hesitation on the author's part which seems to me to be the key to the weakness of his position. Why is it that Mr. Moberly finds it necessary to put the word "saving" in inverted commas? If Vicarious Penitence does really "save" in the sense in which the hymn says, "Salva me, fons pietatis," or "Thou must save, and thou alone," then would it not be simpler to omit the quotation marks? Does not the presence of the quotation marks suggest that Vicarious Penitence is a saving thing, not in the sense which the word ordinarily bears, but in the sense Mr. Moberly thinks it ought to bear? Or, possibly, that it is not saving in a literal sense, but in a sense which, to however slight a degree, involves

the use of metaphor? When we say that Vicarious Penitence is saving, do we mean that it saves the sinner by its own action, or *that it causes him to save himself?*

The illustration which Mr. Moberly gives (and it is a very good illustration) of the phenomenon which he calls Vicarious Penitence, is the attitude of Mr. Peggotty to Em'ly in "David Copperfield." "In a real sense, the old fisherman may be said to have joined in bearing his daughter's sin and shame just because of the bond of love which existed between them. . . . The mental attitude in which father and daughter eventually join is penitential. . . . It is easy to say that the sin was the sin of one, and that it is impossible to be penitent for the sins of another. But how clearly irrelevant is the objection, and how obviously is life too wide for that kind of logic." The last phrase, with its rather provocative ring, we may leave out of account for the present; granting, for the moment, that Vicarious Penitence is possible, and desirable, does it actually save? And if so, how?

If sin means the disturbing of a balance of right and wrong, and penance is the attempt to redress that balance by the undergoing of suffering, and penitence is (as I should say it is) a means of atonement only because, and in so far as, it means pain to the person who feels it, i.e. if penitence is a form of doing penance; then the "Vicarious Penitence" which Jesus felt for us *was actually allowed to count* in the eye of divine justice as satisfaction for sins which we had committed. And in that case I am at a loss to see how this modern "restatement" of the doctrine in any way obviates the criticism which

was levelled at the old statement of the doctrine: "It is immoral that the sufferings of one man should be accepted as satisfaction for the sins of another." True, the sufferings in question, on Mr. Moberly's view, would be mental rather than physical, but I cannot see that this in any way affects the justice of the arrangement.

If on the other hand we discard this notion of sin as the upsetting of a balance, with all the phraseology to which it gives birth, and regard sin as simply a diseased state of the soul, which has to be radically altered if the soul is to be saved; if, that is, the process of salvation is to be, not the undoing of something which lies in the past, but simply and merely the reformation of something which at the present moment is wrong, then does Vicarious Penitence actually save, or does it only inspire us to work out our own salvation? Appeal has been made to Mr. Peggotty; to Mr. Peggotty let us go. What was it about Mr. Peggotty's mental state—call it "penitence" if you will—that had a reforming effect on the character of his daughter? It "showed up" sin to the sinner. Precisely, but is that all? It would be hard to say that it is. For the subtle influence one who loves has on one who is loved cannot be baldly stated as if it were merely a matter of example and precept. We shall naturally be disposed to admit, what Mr. Moberly clearly means us to understand, that in a case like that cited from "David Copperfield" the loathing of sin, which is present first of all in the father, communicates itself, in ways not susceptible of logical analysis, to the daughter. Applying the parable, then, we may say that if the love Jesus bore for us, and showed for

us, is allowed to take its proper effect on our hearts, we are changed into a state in which we loathe our past sins; they have ceased to be part of ourselves: we are "saved" in the sense that we are "to sin no more."

But the inverted commas are still there round the word "saved." For, it must be remembered, we are now using the word "saved" in a sense which to many—and certainly to myself—seems inadequate. Is Salvation only the changing of a man into something other than what he was? He can, it is true, say to himself, "Those dead sins are not now my sins, for it is a new 'I' who speak; they belong to a person who I once was, who was a sinner"—but surely he is in the last resort using a metaphor. He is still the same moral agent; the sins are still laid at his door. Surely it is impossible to appeal, as Mr. Moberly constantly appeals, to the "experience" of converted people, without realizing that such men demand, and think they receive, not merely an impetus or influence which changes their whole moral life, but a reprieve of some kind which annuls a past guilt. It is not merely the self which is changed, but the sin as a concrete fact apart from themselves becomes, in the light of the Atonement, mysteriously annihilated. Mr. Moberly's view surely confuses the sense of "sinfulness" as a condition of the penitent, with the sense of "sin" as something objective which lies in the past. "Save me from its guilt and power"—does the effect of the love of Jesus on our lives really save us from the guilt of sin? Or does it not rather stop short at saving us from the power sin wields over us? There is force in the distinction.

I am bound to say that with all his tenderness for traditional views on this matter, our author has really parted very far from them, when he discards, as he appears to discard, the whole legal imagery in which the doctrine is most commonly expressed. We conceive of sin as a debt, as something demanding repayment, precisely in order to emphasize the fact that there is something in the eternal order of things which has been put out of joint by our sinful action, and the eternal order of things demands restitution : you cannot shirk that claim by pleading that you are a different person from the original offender, because you have undergone a moral transformation. The penitent, after he has received Sacramental Absolution, though his soul is at the moment as completely in a state of grace as it was when it was first sealed by Baptism, nevertheless owes to the offended Justice a penance which he must needs perform. And what if, in the general apostasy of the human race, there is a penance, a satisfaction demanded, which the whole human race, with all its centuries of penal suffering, is incapable of performing ? What will the moral transformation avail us then ? *

But, apart from this, perhaps obscurantist, objection, is it really clear that the theory we are considering proves what it sets out to prove ? For Mr. Moberly assures us that complete penitence is a thing we never meet with in real life ; in our

* Of course, in practice the willingness, and a fortiori the capacity, to perform the penance is an inseparable condition of Sacramental absolution ; but in theory the penance (not merely the ecclesiastical penance, but the penal suffering due here and elsewhere) belongs to the judicial, not to the medicinal side of the Sacrament.

experience it "does but offer a hint of a moral regeneration to which it never attains" (p. 294). It is insufficient atonement for sin, "not because it is *merely penitence* (i.e. *only* a change of character), but because it is *incomplete penitence* (i.e. only a *partial*, and therefore probably a very transitory, change of character)." Therefore, he goes on to urge, penitence must be supplemented and stimulated by (1) punishment or (2) Love. The juxtaposition of the words "stimulated and supplemented" (p. 295) seems to me a peculiarly unfortunate one for the purposes of intelligibility. For whereas the idea of stimulating belongs to the view of the doctrine which I understand Mr. Moberly to hold, the whole terminology of "supplementing" is, so far as I can see, hopelessly committed to the view which I take myself.

For if we mean that punishment literally supplements, that is, makes up for something which is still deficient in human penitence at its best, then either the suffering of Jesus was penal suffering inflicted on the wrong person (an idea to which I understand the moderns object), or the punishment is one which we have to bear ourselves, and therefore it is not concerned with our enquiry here. But how can Love *supplement* penitence? Turn to the case of Mr. Peggotty, and you will find it quite impossible to urge that the father's love made up in any way for something deficient in the daughter's attitude. But indeed we are here confusing ourselves with two wholly different terminologies. There are only two thoroughly far-reaching bodies of metaphor to which the theologian can have recourse—Love or Money. And if you say that something needs to be

supplemented, you are beginning to talk in terms of Money; you imply that there is a debt to be discharged, a sum to be made up, in exchange for which, in return for which, forgiveness will be meted out. If Love can form an item in such a sum, then Love itself is being treated as a form of currency in which part of the debt can be discharged; and for the life of me I cannot see that Mr. Peggotty's love for his daughter can be represented as having had this (as it were) commercial value.

No, what Mr. Peggotty's love did was to stimulate Em'ly's penitence; but stimulating is a very different thing from supplementing. You supplement a force precisely when it is doing all it can, and is still inadequate to the demand made upon it (e.g. if a person is trying to push a motor-car uphill, and simply cannot do it, you put your shoulder to the wheel): you stimulate a force precisely because you know it is not being used to the full, and is capable of being stirred up to further efforts (e.g. you shout encouragingly to the man who is pushing). If you supplement penitence, you do so because it cannot of its very nature go farther than it has gone: if you stimulate it, you do so because you know it is not doing enough. And the point of Mr. Peggotty's love is, clearly, not that it made up for anything which was lacking, but that it made Em'ly's penitence more deep, more thoroughgoing, than it would otherwise have been.

Now, if the atoning Love of Jesus Christ is not something which steps in when penitence fails, but something which enhances the degree of penitence which the sinner can excite, then it is not the Love, but the penitence, which saves. And if we are to be

saved by penitence only (as a direct agent), and yet, on Mr. Moberly's own showing, we are not capable of feeling sufficient penitence to effect the transformation which we mean by the word "salvation," isn't it rather a bad prospect for the human race in general? Who then shall be saved? The Love of Christ has done its utmost, in inspiring us to hate our sins, and instilling more penitence into our hearts, and yet we are not saved, for our penitence is incomplete. It is still incomplete. Surely Mr. Moberly does not mean to depart so far from Christian experience in general, as to suggest that the ordinary penitent, with all Calvary at his back, can personally achieve such a condition of grace as to claim that he no longer deserves God's wrath? If all that I have to my credit at the last day is the combination of the natural penitence which, from human considerations, I can feel for my sins, and the supernatural penitence which is elicited in me by the contemplation of my Saviour's sufferings, then I am of all men most miserable; I shall, so far as I can see, be justly condemned to Hell.

And now perhaps we may go back to a point we left unconsidered for the moment—the possibility of Vicarious Penitence. Do we really gain anything but a confusion of language by the use of the term? Sorrow and Love, sorrow that expresses love, and love that deepens sorrow—both these are present in the heart of the mother who grieves for the fault of her child, and tries to console, or to convert, the sinner. But can this combination be called in any real sense penitence, except in so far as the mother may have helped to cause, by some neglect of her own, the child's delinquency? You cannot have it

both ways. Either there was something in the work of our salvation which was quite outside of and apart from ourselves, call it Love, or Sorrow, or Penitence, if you will; a measure of it which we could never have felt, and can to the end of all time never feel, though the gift of tears were granted us beyond the experience of the holiest of God's Saints: something which, not by way of quickening our hearts or altering our state of mind, but in its own right contributed to the achievement of our deliverance—and then you have what the moderns call an "immoral" transaction; someone doing for others what they could not do for themselves; you are forced back on the Conservative view. Or you may say that the example of Calvary, and not merely the example, but the direct influence of the Divine Love therein made manifest, is a stimulus on which our own souls react, and thereby develop themselves into something fit for the presence of God; our sins not condoned, but left behind us by the mere fact of our having travelled so far from our original position—and then you have broken away from historic doctrine and the experience of the Saints, and from the common-sense reading of innumerable texts of Scripture. This latter doctrine would be all very well, if you are content to let your sins be bygones, and Eternal Justice allows you to do so. But if your sins are to be as if they had never been, then you inevitably demand a transaction, an *opus operatum*, which has blotted out your sins in blood. To be no longer estranged from God is, I conceive, in Mr. Moberly's view the end and consummation of the Christian life; to me it is the avenue to it, the gateway of it. And without that *opus operatum* lying behind them,

I would be forced to see the saints as Johannes Agricola saw them :

> Priest, doctor, hermit, monk grown white
> With prayer, the broken-hearted nun,
> The martyr, the wan acolyte,
> The incense-swinging child,—undone
> Before God fashioned star or sun.

Mr. Moberly does indeed seem to feel (p. 297) that his view rests too much on the medicinal conception of salvation ; that it makes salvation too much a mere change of life, instead of an actual undoing of the past. But the effort he makes to rectify his position with the Conservatives is really beside the mark. Our past sins, he argues, have had their effect, not merely on our own souls, but on the lives of others who have been injuriously affected by them. Apparently, therefore, the Atonement for our sins is not complete until not only we, but all the victims of our past transgressions have been brought into the condition of being "right with God." That opens up a field into which the most quiet conscience may fear to enter : what will become of us, or of our victims, for the offences which we have caused to Christ's brethren, must be left in the merciful hands of God. But this surely is clear, that if we are to hold the full traditional view of the Atonement, we must suppose that the brand left by our sins is not twofold, but threefold. They leave a mark on our own souls—true. They leave a mark on the lives of men around us—true. But over and above all this, they leave a mark in the book of life, a black mark on our records, which no human penitence can efface. There is an objective disturbance in the moral order which our sins have created, and only one

thing could right it, the Sacrifice of Christ, to which we have contributed not a jot or a tittle on our own part. And there can be neither Catholicism nor Evangelicalism where the fact is not realized.

I hope it will not be thought ungenerous, if I press my point even further. Mr. Moberly does not, apparently, wish to associate himself with Conservative theologians when they lay stress on the idea that the suffering (mental or physical) which our Saviour endured, compensated for, was substituted for, some kind of suffering on our part. But he does clearly want to avoid the imputation of reducing the Atonement to an ensample of godly life, without any Sacrifice for sin. It is with this idea that he brings forward reasons, as I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, for saying that the Death of Christ was necessary to the work of Christ. Is it not, on the face of it, rather strange that we should need three different reasons why the death of Christ was necessary? Does it not suggest, that none of these reasons taken by itself is regarded as quite adequate?

To me, I mean, there is one plain reason, cogent in its own right. In order to make up the degree of suffering needed for the payment of our debt, Jesus must drink the cup of human pain to the full; and to this end he must needs embrace that which may be, for all we know, infinitely the worst pain in human experience, the actual pang with which the soul parts from the body. This could not be done without the actual experience of physical death.

Now take Mr. Moberly's three reasons. (1) "The death was deliberately incurred in the fulfilment of his mission, and martyrdom has always power." But

suppose at the last moment the Jews, or Pilate, had relented; the mission of Jesus would be none the less faithfully fulfilled, so far as his preaching went. And martyrdom is surely valuable (from the point of view of the moderns, at any rate) only in so far as it testifies to a willingness to die. (2) And willingness to die is all that is needed to bear witness to Love; Vicarious Penitence is not deepened, but only attested, by the actual fact of death. (3) "The death was intrinsically necessary, both in general to the perfecting of the human character of Jesus, and specifically to his final conquest of sin." But here again, we are not meant to suppose that it is anything more than willingness to die which sets the Crown upon life's struggle; Mr. Moberly's own words on page 313 leave no doubt of that. The obscurantist could of course urge that up to the actual moment at which he expired, Jesus could have come down from the Cross by an exercise of his power: but from the modern point of view it seems as if the control of the matter passed out of his hands when he confessed himself God before the High Priest, and refused to answer the procurator.

We have, then, three independent reasons why it was necessary for our sakes that Jesus should be willing to die: and, no doubt, the simplest way of manifesting that willingness to the world was to let injustice take its course, to let the Lord of Glory be crucified. But I do not see that we have thus established the intrinsic necessity for the death. The death is regarded, from this point of view, only as the crown of a life: it is still the will of the Saviour, not his suffering, which is regarded as directly efficacious. And yet, is it quite satisfactory to assure

ourselves, "Jesus lived for me," when the whole language of Christianity makes at once for the turning-point, and says, "Jesus died for me"?

Not only by the will to suffer, but by the actual undergoing of suffering as well, Jesus was made our Victim. The world may call the transaction immoral, but for us one thing is certain: that the general apostasy of our race did claim compensatory suffering which we could only experience by eternal death; that Divine Justice could not, of its own Nature, overlook such a claim; that the suffering of the Sinless was the only compensation which could be an equivalent for the suffering we deserved; that the acceptance of that sacrifice in our stead is a Divine mystery, not fathomable to human thought, because the Mercy which atoned was One with the Justice which forgave.

CHAPTER X

AUTHORITY AND EXPERIENCE

IT was my good fortune to be examining the other day at a well-known public school, and to set in the General Paper a list of commonly used proverbs for elucidation or paraphrase. One of these was the famous dictum of S. Augustine (quoted in a footnote on p. 373 of "Foundations"), *Securus judicat orbis terrarum.* One ingenious candidate simply wrote down the phrase and added, "i.e. Anybody can shout with the crowd." As is customary with schoolboy mistakes, the mistake here in question had really a good deal behind it. For if the principle simply means that Hobbs, Nobbs, Noakes, and Stokes combine to say that a thing is true, *securi*, without fear of contradiction, then it does seem to be a thoroughly cowardly maxim, and to involve a tyranny which any honest man would die rather than admit. And it makes no difference whatever, to an honest man, whether the *orbis terrarum* means the whole of the known world, or the whole body of persons who believe in a Christian revelation, or the whole body of persons who are in Communion with the Church. If they are to be allowed, with no more right than that involved by their numbers, to decide on truth and falsity in doctrine, then we had better give up doctrine alto-

gether. Administrative Government by counting of heads is liable to abuse ; the investigation of facts by counting of heads is, from the outset, a preposterous form of procedure.

Is that then all that is meant by S. Augustine, when he uses the phrase, or when he uses another phrase, rightly associated with it in Mr. Rawlinson's article, "*Ego vero Evangelio non crederem, nisi me catholicae ecclesiae commoveret auctoritas*" ? Surely not ; surely the appeal is not to mere numbers as such (which appeal would have abandoned the world to Arianism), but to the Church considered as a "spirit-bearing body" (to use a cant phrase), resting its confidence on a Divine promise of guidance into all truth. But, we may ask, how met ? how constituted ? how capable of expressing itself ? The answer to that, Mr. Rawlinson suggests, is to be found in an examination of the primary meaning of the Latin word "auctoritas," from which our own word "authority" may possibly have travelled far. This investigation he does not conduct fully on paper, being content for the most part with a statement of the result, namely, that "auctoritas" should be translated, not "infallible voice," but "corporate witness," or possibly "inspired witness."

Now, there is one technical meaning of the word which has, no doubt, largely coloured its subsequent usage. When the Roman Senate agreed unanimously on a proposition, it normally proceeded to draw up this proposition in the form of a *senatus consultum*, or decree of the senate, which by custom, though not in strict legal theory, had the force of law. But if a tribune of the people exercised his right of veto to prevent the proposition agreed

upon being enshrined in a legislative formula, the Senate had to content itself with registering in the proceedings of the house a sort of Minority Report, a "resolution" of the Senate; and this, though it had no legal value even in practice, had behind it the *auctoritas senatus;* it showed clearly what the Senate's will was, and a loyal citizen would, in consequence, naturally take his cue from it.

But there are two other suggestions in the word. (1) The word "auctor," author, was often used to imply that So-and-so was your "authority" for a statement; e.g. *Auctor est Thucydides*, "Thucydides is my authority for saying what I am saying. I have no access to independent documents, but I find this in Thucydides, and my regard for his general high character as a historian inclines me to rest my statement on his bare word." (2) In a more general sense, a citizen was said to have *auctoritas* when his words had weight in the councils of the nation, when he was known to be a trustworthy, responsible person—"prestige" is the word most commonly used in translating it.

Therefore, when Augustine says he was influenced by the *auctoritas* of the Church, he may mean an expression of feeling on the part of the Church, to a certain effect; or he may mean the testimony of the Church, based presumably on sources of knowledge lost to the investigator; or he may mean simply the prestige of the Church, which makes him loth to part company with it. Mr. Rawlinson's rendering, "corporate witness" corresponds to the second of these: * and even if he is right in selecting

* He himself seems to connect it with the first ("Foundations," p. 366).

it, I find it hard to feel that the word has not in this place some *nuances* of the other associations I have described.

Now, I suppose that the orthodox view of authority is roughly this: just as each of us probably learnt his or her religion, not from the Bible, but from a mother who had learnt it from her mother, and so back, if not to the Apostles, at least for a very long period, so from the first the Bible record was not meant to be complete; even if it contained all that was necessary for salvation, the interpreting of the contents was not a simple matter. For that purpose, recourse must be had to the tradition handed on in the various parts of the Church, and most of all in that central city, which claimed to represent the direct tradition of the Prince of the Apostles. Where different traditions clashed, the Bishops had to meet, and determine, by the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit, which tradition was to be followed. Where heresy arose, the tradition asserted itself by means of definition, that is to say, of delimiting the bounds within which debate was impious. Authority is thus both an appeal to the credit of someone who has peculiar knowledge at his disposal—the Bishop, that is, as trustee of a deposit of tradition; and also an appeal to the dignity of an institution—the Church as directly guided by the Holy Ghost; and the pronouncements of a Council demand at least the respect of every loyal Churchman, like the *senatus auctoritas*, and where they are made with the full formalities of definition, may obviously be used as a test of membership.

I should hesitate, therefore, to reduce the sense of *auctoritas* to mere "witness," or "corporate

witness," though this is clearly part of the meaning. And it is doubtful if "inspired witness" quite rectifies the situation. For it is not in the bearing of testimony, but in the estimation of testimony, that the need of divine inspiration is most acutely felt. But, so far as authority is a matter of witness, what is it that is witnessed to? On the view just expounded surely the traditional body of teaching handed down orally in the Church, or in some part of the Church. But this does not seem to be what Mr. Rawlinson means, for he describes it as "witness of the Saints to the validity of the spiritual experience on which their lives are based"; and that is surely a very different thing.

In the first place, it assumes, or seems to assume, that the Saints are the constructors of theology, or at least the definers of it. But this is neither necessary in theory, nor historically true. A thoroughly bad man who is a Bishop may contribute to the infallible defining of dogma, for it is in virtue of his office, not of his personal character, that he claims the inspiration of the Spirit. He may, of course, misrepresent tradition or pervert the truth for selfish ends; that is a different matter; but in cases where no end is to be served, why may not a Borgia interpret the tradition of his Church as faithfully as a Sarto?

And in the second place, it suggests that the only extra-Biblical authority we have for any doctrinal assertion is the fact that belief in it has, in numerous lives, produced a specific type of sanctity. We shall have a good deal to say upon this point in the course of the present chapter. For the present, it is enough to observe that if that is really what the early councils

were attesting in their decisions, they were wholly unconscious of the fact.

This is no mere theoretical distinction ; it affects vitally our view of how dogma became crystallized. An excellent example of this may be found in what is, partly at any rate, Mr. Rawlinson's own work, in Chapter IV. The Eucharist, he suggests, was in its Institution simply an eschatological Sacrament, " an earnest of the Messianic banquet, the eating and drinking in the Kingdom of Heaven " (p. 162). That is to say, Jesus instituted it as something quite distinct from any idea of his own Sacramental Presence. Only later, as the Church began to formulate her theology, after the breakdown of the Apocalyptic hope, did the conception of the Real Presence become part of Christian theology. We naturally ask, How ? How did anybody come to think of it ? And the answer is : " In actual experience the Eucharist was discovered to involve a present consciousness of realized communion with the Lord, a present gladness, a gift of spiritual strength and refreshment ever renewed . . . and the actuality and vividness of Eucharistic experience demanded a more adequate Eucharistic theology."

Could there be a more improbable statement of the facts ? Is it not evident from the outset that the whole of Eucharistic theology is based upon an attempt to interpret our Saviour's own words, This is my Body, This is my Blood ? The believer naturally says to himself, Clearly this means something ; how exactly are we to express what it does mean ? That effort at expression goes on until it reaches its final careful statement at the Council of Trent. The whole theological development (so far

as it can be called development at all) is deductive, arguing downwards from the primary certainty of the Master's own words. There is not a wisp of evidence as to any process by which people argued inductively, as from effect to cause, from their own feelings at the reception of the Sacrament to a Presence in the Sacrament itself. I would go further, and say that if the faithful had not from the first gone to the Sacrament already expecting, in virtue of a Divine promise, that Jesus was there to meet them, they would never have had any Eucharistic experience at all. I know that I have received Sacramental grace from countless Communions, because my Saviour has assured me of it. But if it were suddenly revealed to me that the Words of Institution were never really spoken, I would admit at once, without hesitation, that I had been deceived all along, and that there had never been any special Presence in Communion, any more than in my ordinary prayers. Eucharistic experience does not, as a matter of observation, precede, it follows on and arises out of, Eucharistic doctrine. I am perfectly confident that there have been thousands in the Church of England who have gone on to the day of their deaths receiving the Body and Blood of their Saviour, and not having the smallest consciousness of it. Why? Because they do not believe in the doctrine.

It is time to come to grips with this matter of "experience." Authority is, as we have seen, on Mr. Rawlinson's view, "the corporate witness of the Saints to the validity of the spiritual experience on which their lives were based." I have suggested above that the Saints never pretended to be bearing

witness to anything of the sort. But if they did, then it can only be said that they had no right to, and that their evidence (including apparently all the Conciliar decisions) is completely valueless. They might, conceivably, bear witness to the fact that they had had something or other which may be called spiritual experience. But neither they nor anyone else in the world were in a position to say whether that experience was, or was not valid.

The word "experience" is one which we come across at every turn in "Foundations"; but in that book it is nowhere analysed or defined. This is probably because psychological treatment is nowadays very much in the air; bank clerks discuss the ecstasies of S. Theresa with complete familiarity, and Mysticism is all but a breakfast-table topic in the daily Press. But inasmuch as few people realize the intrinsic difficulties of the psychological method, and the blank impossibility of proving by that method anything that is of more than curious interest, it may be well to examine our terms rather carefully.

I suppose there are three separate sets of phenomena which may be described as spiritual experience. (1) There are definitely supernatural, or, lest we should seem to be begging a question, let us say abnormal revelations of God's intimacy, which have been given, almost exclusively, to persons of a very holy manner of life, such as visions, auditions, trances, ecstasies, levitations in the air, etc. (2) There are certain psychic phenomena which do not seem in any way to break into or contradict the order of Nature, because they are entirely shut up within the fortress of the soul; sudden conversions, extraordinary

consciousness of the nearness of God, or the sweetness of his presence, etc. (3) There is the ordinary common routine of an interior life, such as that of the present writer, which has never felt any sensation for which an abnormal or psychic explanation needs to be sought : a life which imbibes, or trusts that it imbibes, Sacramental grace without feeling it, just as unconsciously as the body to which it is attached continually repairs its wasted tissues.

To which of these three kinds of spiritual experience (clumsily divided, but clearly enough marked for the purposes of our present argument) does the modern theologian so persistently appeal ? I hardly think it can be to the first class. A man who has been through an abnormal experience, whether religious or otherwise, is able, in certain cases at any rate, to describe its content ; to say what he saw, or what he thought he saw—the content is the same whether he really saw it or not. He can also satisfy himself as to whether he really saw it or not—not by any vulgar appeal to the bystanders, or attempt to harmonize it with the rest of his experience, but by that clear, incommunicable certainty which does assure us whether we are awake or asleep. But whence the vision came, whose voice it was he heard, neither he nor anyone else can venture to determine. If a Saint is levitated in prayer, the fact may be vouched for by unprejudiced bystanders ; but how is he to be sure it is of God ? Does not Satan disguise himself as an Angel of light ? As a matter of fact, one test has always been recognized in such cases, namely, whether the content of the Revelation, from the Christian point of view, was such as one might expect to proceed from a divine, or from an angelic,

source. It is the old appeal of Jesus to those who accused him of casting out devils by Beelzebub. But this assumption entirely vitiates the argument, when such visions, etc., are used for *evidential* purposes. You cannot establish the truth of religion by appealing to the validity of an experience which you only declare valid on the assumption that religion is true. And indeed, that Christianity is true. We believe that it was Jesus Christ who gave S. Francis the stigmata, because we are Christians.* If we were not Christians, we might equally well attribute it to Allah, or to Zeus, or to any conceivable agency—beneficent, malevolent, or merely neutral—which may exist in the unknown world that lies behind and beyond material phenomena.

Sister Katherine Emmerich saw the events of the Passion in review; but how are you to persuade a non-Christian psychologist that the influence which inspired her was divine? Bernadette saw and had speech with the Immaculate; but will you persuade a faith-healer of the truth of the Immaculate Conception by showing him what goes on at Lourdes? Priests have seen the Host turn into visible Flesh; will Mr. Rawlinson assert Transubstantiation on that ground? The only reason why we accept the truth of the content of such revelations is because *we knew beforehand that it was true.* I believe in Christian "revelations" because I believe, by faith, in Christianity; I disbelieve Buddhist "revelations" on the same principle and no other.

It is perhaps worth while to add that any appeal

* The case of Blessed Joan of Arc is very illuminating: the English theory that she was a witch, and the French theory that she was a Saint, both seemed to fit the facts; until an impartial arbiter decided in favour of the French.

to the abnormal in justification of Christianity is bound to wreck itself on the rock of modern Spiritualism. It is well known what the spirits have to say, as a rule, at mediumistic séances, about the Divinity of Christ. I take the liberty of disbelieving the spirits, because, however real, however tangible they may be, I have no possible guarantee that they are telling the truth: indeed, on a priori grounds, I should suspect that they are liars and the fathers of lies. But on the same ground I should be very shy of basing any particle of my creed on mystical experiences which, from the purely scientific point of view, are on a level with modern "spiritualistic" phenomena.

The second class of experiences has in a sense more evidential weight, for it does appeal to the heart of the person who experiences it with a direct certainty, which criticism cannot invalidate—for him. But when he tries to convince others on the strength of it; when he stands up and "testifies," in the good old Evangelical sense, to the change that has been wrought in his life, it is possible for his audience to discredit it on numerous grounds. The man is a neurotic subject; he had, really, been plagued by his conscience for a long time beforehand, and it was in an unhealthily nervous state that he received this impression which he calls "conversion." Perhaps, the influence once beginning to tell, he "worked himself up" into further paroxysms. Physical or psychical conditions may have contributed; do we not all know how a hot, stuffy atmosphere, or the glare of a blinding sun in the desert, may play tricks with our feelings; how certain places have an indefinitely "electric" atmos-

phere, which might easily overbalance a sensitive temperament ?

Directly the experience is transmuted into words, it becomes matter for the psychologist ; and psychology has this disadvantage, that it cannot even begin to investigate the validity of certain states of mind ; it can only classify them and correlate them, and speculate as to the purely physical causes which helped to produce them. No one has examined the psychology of orthodox Christians more thoroughly or impartially than the late William James ; but was William James an orthodox Christian ? The spiritual experience which is most vivid and most transforming in the mind which is the recipient of it, cannot, from the very nature of the case, be called into the witness-box.

We cannot trust mystic visions, as such, unless we are prepared to accept Buddhist revelations—some of us would even have difficulties about Swedenborg. We cannot trust the evidence of moments of unnatural exultation, in which people are ready to go through fire and water ; do not even the dervishes the same ? The whole rich heritage left to the Church of abnormal mystical privileges can have no evidential value until it is coloured by an a priori belief in the truth of Christianity; and, more than that, of those particular doctrines which the revelation involves. There remains to be considered the possibility of establishing doctrine by an appeal to the common presumptions upon which the ordinary struggling Christian conducts his life.

It is this last kind of spiritual experience to which, I imagine, Mr. Rawlinson chiefly refers. For he speaks of a corporate witness ; and it is not easy to

bear corporate witness to any kind of experience which is not common to a large number of believers. And " the saints " is presumably used in the Pauline sense of the word as equivalent to " the whole body of believers." Now, if I may claim a position as one of such, I hope I shall not be accused of egoism when I take as typical of that kind of spiritual experience my own spiritual experience—since a man can always be more sure of his own sensations than of any sensation he knows only at second-hand.

Suppose I came down to breakfast one morning and found a note on my table from the editor of *Crockford*, to the following effect: " Dear Sir,—In preparation for the Lambeth Conference of 1920 we are anxious to obtain from a large number of Churchmen a corporate witness to the validity of their spiritual experience. Whilst recognizing that what is guaranteed by such a consensus is rather a life than a theology, we feel at the same time that the hypothesis of its validity must inevitably involve dogmatic implications. Will you therefore kindly fill up in the enclosed form the testimony you can bear to the doctrines of (1) the Divinity of Christ, (2) his Resurrection from the Dead, (3) his Presence in the holy Sacrament of the Altar, from your own spiritual experience exclusively ? You are specially requested to leave out of sight any theological certainty you may derive from the Bible, from Church tradition, or from deductions made from either of these, and to confine yourself exclusively to stating which of these doctrines you have proved to be true, and in what sense you have proved them to be true, in your life." What answer should I make to such a communication as that ?

I could only say that my religious outlook was based on certain dogmas which had been instilled into me in childhood, certain others which I had come to accept within the last ten years, in addition to, or in correction of, my early training. That, with these doctrines in my mind, I had lived, on the whole, with heaven frequently in my thoughts, sometimes obstinately rebelling against what I conceived to be my duty, sometimes humbled and penitent; that I had chosen here, and refused there; incurred this, and avoided that, in view of my convictions; that I might be more prosperous than I am, or much worse than I am, without them; but that this is impossible for me to determine. They have, in any case, made a difference to me; my life is "based" on them; but clearly it is possible to base one's life on a fraud, and if Christianity is a fraud, then I have done so. I find a certain satisfaction in my religion: that is to say, the moments when I should have been sorry to lose it are more frequent, when I look back upon them, than the moments when I wished I were capable of abandoning it—and could not, I do not know why. But the fact that my religion is pleasant to me does not prove that it is anything more than a pleasant illusion.

All my life is explicable on the supposition that my religion is true, and it is in that way that I like to look back upon it: to call lucky accidents providential, and the path I chose my vocation, and that which enabled me to counteract my wrong impulses grace. I like to think that in the moments when I found my prayer came easy, God was really close to me, manifesting himself to me; that when it was harder, and God seemed more distant, that was only

God's way of putting me to the test. But if anyone likes to say that the resistance I made against temptation was only due to my will, strengthened by good schooling; that the lucky accidents were no more than accidents; that my vocation was only my desire to do good to mankind in the way which naturally appealed to me; that my prayers were only an expression of my natural devotional instinct, sometimes more easy, sometimes more difficult, according to my circumstances physical or mental—then I can produce no argument to show him that this is not so. I am bound to say that on this latter supposition it is quite easy to interpret my religious experience—if Christianity isn't true. There is no evidence one way or the other; only, owing to this strange obsession in my mind which I call faith, the facts present themselves to me in my light, not in his.

All I can confidently avow as the content of my spiritual experience, unreinforced by dogma, is that I do find in myself a repulsion, not æsthetic or utilitarian, to certain courses of action which I describe as sinful; that I do naturally think of the world as originated and as governed by a supreme Ruler; that I do feel a shrinking from the idea of extinction after death. In fact, it would justify me in being a Kantian. All that is specifically Christian in my religion does indeed appeal to me, does satisfy my devotional instincts, but it is not therefore necessarily true, since (1) other people find their devotional instincts satisfied by systems hopelessly opposed to my own; and (2) I have no doubt a competent psychologist could trace my own variations to mental idiosyncrasies—a love of mystery, a love of

romance, a fondness for clear issues in argument, and so on.

"But," it will be urged, "if your spiritual experience in general is no guarantee in general of the validity of the religion it is based on, surely, positing the fact that you are a believing Christian, you can point to certain detailed doctrines, and say: 'This helped me; this is real to me; that appeals to me.' And to those at any rate who are Christians like yourself—we will forget the world of unbelievers and misbelievers—such testimony from you will have weight." But why should it? There are persons calling themselves Christians who do not believe in the Real Presence; how am I to know that the difference between them and myself is more than temperamental? There are people who assert their belief in the Divinity of Christ and the Resurrection, and yet conceive those doctrines in a way utterly incompatible with my theology. I believe these doctrines because they are presented to me, with authority, for my acceptance; if you mean to tell me that the only authority which presents them to me is based upon the fact that I do believe them, surely we shall become entangled in an inextricable circle.

"But," I shall be told, "you are not alone. Thousands of others, millions of others, find and have found the same satisfaction in the same doctrines as yourself. Is not the corporate witness enough for you?" All this sounds to me very much like an invitation to come and shout with the crowd. If I am right in maintaining that the justification I find for basing specifically Christian doctrines on my own experience is literally nil, then the justi-

fication afforded by the discovery that 999 other people have had the same experience is nil multiplied by 1000, and I have been brought up to understand that $1000 \times 0 = 0$.

The whole argument from experience seems to rest on the assumption that you can first make people believe, on the strength of Bible documents or inherited tradition, certain clearly defined dogmas; and then, when they have got accustomed to this way of thinking, you can come and knock away the supports on which the belief rests, Biblical or traditional, and say, "We have now proved the truth of these doctrines, because we have reared on them so splendid an edifice of faith." That is really the way in which "Foundations" treats the question of the Divinity of Christ; it demolishes the historical dogmas on which the belief has been accepted, and then points to the faith of people in past ages who accepted the doctrine, and says, "Ah! there's no smoke without fire, is there? You wouldn't find these doctrines exercising such a profound effect on men's minds if there wasn't SOMETHING in them. What that something really was we will now proceed to decide: of course it was not what they thought, by any means." But to me, as I look round the world, the whole of history looks like one vast ruin of pathetic faiths resting on false foundations; and if Christianity goes to swell that heap to-morrow, will it really look very different, in the world's eyes, from the old false religions of Greece or Egypt? "But Christianity saved all that was best in the dying civilization of Rome." Did it? Or was it only the infusion of new blood from the North? "It tamed the Northern invaders." Did it? Or was it only

the dying civilization which conquered its captors? "It abolished gladiatorial shows, and the Slave trade." Did it? Or was it just the progress of humanitarian civilization?

What, then, becomes of the "corporate witness"? Are we to give up the πολλοί, and go to the χαρίεντες instead? According to Mr. Brook (p. 52) there are certain people who have a genius for religion, as others have for painting or music; and just as the man with the musical sense, or the artistic sense, becomes a musical or an art critic whom we illiterati must trust, so the prophet has a religious sense, which should be guide to those less educated.* But our objection still holds. One musical person stigmatizes Wagner as vulgar, another holds him to be the final product of the centuries; one curses the Post-impressionists as madmen, another hails them as the dawn of a bright morrow. Now, if eternal Salvation depended on our view of the merits of Wagner or the Post-impressionists, we should feel a trifle confused at this discrepancy. Can anyone say that the discrepancy is not tenfold worse in the matter of religion? You tell me to stick to Isaiah, S. Augustine, S. Francis, Bishop Andrewes for my authorities: how can I tell, apart from a dogmatic presupposition, that they are more trustworthy spiritual experts than Buddha, Mahomet, Mrs. Eddy, and Rabindranath Tagore? They are all prophets, how shall I discern them? If you will give me my deposit of Church tradition as a fixed point beforehand, then I will undertake to distinguish which are God's Saints, and which are only very good

* Mr. Rawlinson seems inclined to attach less weight to the testimony of the religious expert (p. 367 footnote).

heathens, or very good heretics. But until you give me such a fixed principle, I can no more trust the experience of the chosen few, than I can trust my own experience, or the experience of the majority of Christians.

No one, of course, will be disposed to deny that in practice, when dealing with an unbeliever, we do urge him to adopt, or to continue the outward observances of Christianity, prayer, meditation, etc., in the hope that in the using of them he will come to realize their meaning. But this is not an appeal to experience. The faith which comes to such a person comes to him, not as a subsequent reflection on his experience while he was praying and meditating, but as a mysterious faculty which arises out of these observances, we know not how. We do say to the unbeliever, "Give it a trial," but we do not add, "And in six months' time you will have at your disposal more evidence than you have now, the evidence, namely, of the comfortable feelings you have had during the exercise." We add, "And by God's grace in six months' time, though you will have no particle more evidence than you have now, you will be estimating the evidence differently, in the light of a divine illumination which will meanwhile have come into your mind, all unobserved." Faith, which is the sum of all that we can call ordinary spiritual experience, is a light which illuminates our path from behind us. But you cannot turn round on it and investigate it. For if you look into the light your eyes are blinded.

This whole theory of the *consensus fidelium* has had a great vogue in the Church of England in recent years, owing to a difficulty often felt as to the ultimate

seat of ecclesiastical authority. For, when we ask the question, How is it possible to determine which of the Councils were orthodox, and which were not? the Roman Catholic has a very simple ready-made answer, Those which are recognized by the See of Peter. But the Anglican, not quite liking to refer the questioner to the XXXIX Articles of Religion, is forced to say, Those which were subsequently ratified by acceptance on the part of the faithful. It is not relevant to our point here to consider the very difficult objection, Yes, but how do you know whether the Nestorians or their opponents were the faithful? However this may be; to whatever extent, or with whatever right, the faithful as a democratic body may claim to ratify the decrees of the Church, it is quite certain that as a matter of history they never claimed to originate them, on the strength of their own "spiritual experience." I have tried to show, further, that however we interpret this phrase, it cannot really be regarded as the basis of doctrinal validity, because it is itself conditioned, through and through, by a priori dogmatic assumptions.

As a matter of modernist psychology, this appeal to experience is very interesting. The modernist will not allow himself to be regarded as in any way prejudiced in favour of one particular theological system. He therefore collects together the testimony of innumerable other people, primitive Bishops, mediæval nuns, and contemporary charcoal-burners, who were and are, beyond any shadow of dispute, prejudiced theologians—prejudiced by what they believed upon a basis of purely traditional authority. And the result of this appeal is served up as if it

were the most modern of all critical investigations, an essay in psychology. But if a priori assumptions are to play no part in modern theology, spiritual experience must play no part in modern theology, for spiritual experience is based on a priori assumptions.

APPENDIX

ON BOGLES AND GLAMOURS

SOMEWHERE in the course of this last chapter I have dropped an unguarded word about the evidence claimed by Spiritualists as the result of séances. For fear this should be thought a cowardly *obiter dictum*, I take leave to interrupt the main thread of this book in order to give some account of my views on the matter, and of the parallelism which I believe to exist between the appeal to mediumistic revelations, and the appeal to abnormal mystical experiences on the part of the Saints as evidence for Christianity.

A Scottish friend informs me that the word "bogle" properly implies a ghostly apparition which is, so to speak, really there, as opposed to a "glamour," an illusion, that is, in the mind of the perceiving subject, which makes him think, wrongly, that something uncanny is before him. Since the words "objective" and "subjective" are at once hideous and confusing, it will be well to use the terms "bogle" and "glamour" instead, with the same distinction in view: they are terse, and, I think, expressive.

Now, when people are talking about modern Spiritualism, as they constantly do, it is commonly assumed that the only question at issue as to its truth or falsity is the question, whether the uncanny experiences which people have at séances are really due to bogles existing outside of themselves, or merely to glamours which obsess their minds. It is suggested,

for example, that there is one really unsolved problem at the back of it all, how one mind can act directly upon another, without any medium of speech or gesture. All else may be resolved to this: automatic writing, and all the other phenomena of the séance, are simply due to brain-waves which pass from one human subject to another. And if it be objected that there are cases in which messages purporting to come from the dead contained items of information to which no living person in the room could possibly have had access, it is rejoined, with some reason, that the subconscious mind is a tricky thing to deal with at best, and the knowledge might be present in the subconsciousness of some person present without having ever emerged above the threshold.

But in reality, the issue between the Glamourists and the Bogulars is not the ultimate issue. What Spiritualism claims for itself, as a religious system, is that by psychical media it can actually put the bereaved lover or parent in touch with the lost one, and thus (*a*) prove definitely the fact of personal survival after death, (*b*) comfort the mourner by a sense of continued intimacy, (*c*) determine, by means of questions, something of the conditions of that future life, in which the "spirits" with which communication is opened are at the moment subsisting.

Now, if we set aside the Glamourist interpretation of the facts, which reduces the occult influences to the action of one living brain upon another, there are still three perfectly respectable hypotheses on which the phenomena of spiritualism may be explained, without the necessity of supposing that the medium is ever in contact with the "souls" (in the Christian sense) of the departed subjects.

Firstly, there is the good old-fashioned hypothesis of devils. Whether in the light of modern occultism, and of the Nemesis which so frequently overtakes modern occultists (that of complete moral collapse) this theory

is really as old-fashioned as it sounds, may legitimately be doubted. Certainly I have been informed by one, who had a remarkably wide acquaintance with people who had lost the use of their reason, that he was confident that mania was in most cases due to actual dæmonic possession, and that no one who had been face to face with the phenomena could doubt this interpretation; nor was he one of whom any theological bias could reasonably be suspected. On the diabolic hypothesis, the evidence for a future life, as well as any particular evidence as to the conditions of that life, clearly breaks down. For the last thing we should expect is that devils should tell the truth. And the consolation of addressing the dead is sensibly diminished, if we are really dealing only with malicious agencies, who impersonate the dead, and trade upon the content of their consciousness.

But if it be objected, that even in view of scriptural warnings, even in view of the demoralizing effect of spiritualistic research on certain people, even in view of the assurances of an ex-medium like Mr. Raupert, it is uncharitable of us to suggest a definitely and necessarily mischievous agency as the source of these revelations, is it not still possible, that there are neutral or non-moral agencies at work all around us, which are capable of producing the phenomena under discussion? Personal agencies possibly, or even impersonal agencies: what if the message which assures us of the presence of a dead person is really only a brain-wave, of some sort hitherto uninvestigated, which he has left behind him? And that the evidence which the message affords as to the conditions of the hereafter is vitiated as well by the uncertainty of its source, as by the necessity of its passing through human minds, at great risk of unconscious tampering in transit, before it can be communicated to the outside world?

Thirdly, it might be suggested that the agency is in some sense personal, and is yet quite unconnected with

the actual soul, the highest spiritual principle, of the person to whom it attaches. The question has been begged, owing to our habit of assuming that anything which is possessed of the same content of knowledge as one whom we know, is necessarily to be dignified with the name of his soul. The author of "Appearance and Reality," who has perhaps as good a claim as any living Englishman to speak with the authority of a philosopher, has suggested that all uncanny experiences, all susceptibility to ghostly influences, so far from being an advance to a higher stage in the development of the race, are really a throw-back to the animal. Instances abound in which animals, especially horses and dogs, appear to have possessed some super-normal faculties which revealed to them influences which human bystanders were slow to perceive, or never perceived at all. Is it not possible that the "spirit" with which the medium is in communication, is not what theology calls the soul, or anything approaching to it? (Whether theology is right in asserting the existence of a soul, does not need discussion here.) And is it not a possible interpretation of some cases of dual personality, that the subject did not really combine two souls, but that a psychical influence, an animal efflux of the personality of someone else, had penetrated into the alien consciousness? Perhaps even the belief which has appeared at various times in the transmigration of souls may have its origin in some such phenomenon. Now, if this view be right, have we any evidence of a strictly personal survival, that is, of a survival of consciousness? And is not the integrity of the message still open to the suspicion described in the last paragraph?

"And yet," I can fancy someone saying, "it is rather an arbitrary way of dealing with a branch of scientific enquiry, to suggest all the possible rival hypotheses, and say that while these other possibilities are still open, all chance of ascertaining the truth is at an end.

Would not a spirit like that have effectually obstructed all the progress of Science?" To which I would only reply that I cannot see how Psychical research, in so far as it is carried on by the use of mediums, can ever be properly called scientific. For Science, being the study of objective truth, demands above all that the investigator who deals with the facts at first hand should be in an absolutely normal state of consciousness, and that any factors which are introduced into his enquiry by the personal equation should be rigorously eliminated. You do not set down a colour-blind scientist to experiment with litmus paper. And the medium, who is in all modern spiritualism the direct investigator, is confessedly putting himself into an abnormal state of mind. I cannot therefore see in what possible circumstances we shall ever be able to establish the truth, as between three or four rival hypotheses, each of which covers the facts; or how science can ever be called in to give an explanation of phenomena, which depend, not on the interaction of matter with matter, but on the interaction of mind with mind.

To apply this parable, I am sorry to say I think there is a tendency at the present moment to try to establish the truth of the Christian revelation by an injudicious appeal to mystical experiences. It is somehow felt that by the psychological investigation of these, we shall be able to arrive at a scientific a posteriori demonstration of their validity. But the mystic, like the medium, is not in a normal state of consciousness, and therefore he is a witness to whom no legal value can in strictness be attached. He cannot give evidence of his own state of mind. To those who believe in the probability that he is in direct contact with heaven, his utterances may be, and have been, full of comfort and illumination. But if I were outside the fold of Christianity, I should take no more notice of them than I do of the mediums.

An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign;

evil, because we are too arrogant to enter the Kingdom of Heaven as little children, adulterous, because we have tended to forsake our old romance, the traditions of the historic Church, with their direct and compelling claim upon our belief. The theologian who tries to build up the fabric of Christianity even on normal Christian experiences is, in reality, seeking after a sign; he is clamouring for an empirical demonstration, and there shall no empirical demonstration be given him. True, signs shall follow them that believe; but the signs follow, and do not precede the belief, and are valuable, in the last resort, only to the believer.

CHAPTER XI

HE AND IT

THERE are, I suppose, two philosophies in the world which claim for themselves complete logical coherence, resting, not unnaturally, at diametrically opposite poles of philosophical thought. The one is Materialism, the other Pantheism.

Materialism, basing itself nowadays on the presumed scientific fact that inorganic matter is prior in time to organic matter, and organic matter again to sensitive life, and the life of the soul or the intellect is later in time than life which is merely sensitive, accords to priority in time priority in ultimate reality. The mineral explains the plant, the plant the jelly-fish, the jelly-fish Man ; and thus everything in the last resort is to be explained only in terms of that which is the origin of all, matter. Our thoughts are only a mode of the grey matter of our brain, and so on.

Pantheism, the contrary tendency, reverses the order ; and, trading on the use of the word " higher " by scientific persons to designate the more complicated and later in time of the developments of nature, protests heartily against what it calls an attempt to explain the higher in terms of the lower. Matter (as Dr. Illingworth reminds us) has no need of spirit, whereas spirit has need of matter as of something in which it can express itself : therefore, if intelli-

gibility is to be our test of ultimate value, spirit is more likely to afford us an explanation of matter than matter of spirit, and therefore spirit is the thing; in terms of spirit everything must be interpreted. Rejecting the attractive by-path of Solipsism, which would regard the whole of nature as merely the experience of an individual thinker; rejecting, too, the idea of a plurality of spirits, a commonwealth of human souls which ultimately are the cause of all being, Pantheism directs our gaze to a Soul of Souls, a World-soul, which explains everything, and includes everything; non-moral, because it has to include in itself both good and evil.

The two opposing tendencies of theistic metaphysics start from precisely the same antagonism. Transcendentalism rests on priority in time, and makes God the Cause of all things, in the sense that he existed before all things, and, so to speak, set them in motion. The Nemesis of this view of metaphysics comes when God is conceived of, as he was by the deists of the eighteenth century, as a First Cause, a personal Originator, who had wound up the watch of Creation, and was letting it go in its own way; though, in deference to traditional scruples, he was also supposed to be standing ready with a whip at the other end of time, waiting to catch the sinner with eternal punishment.

Immanentism, on the other hand, does not seek to define God as something prior in time, but rather looks for a statement of his nature in terms of intelligibility. God is not so much the Cause, as the Explanation of all being. You find him by lifting the stone or cleaving the wood, he is in everything, immanent in everything; in him we live and move

and have our being; and something very like ultimate absorption into him is the goal of man's existence, since personality, in the sense of something finite and impenetrable, is only an illusory phase in our development.

Under the glare of the desert sun, where the vastness and emptiness of nature suggested above all the unapproachableness, the incommunicableness of the divine nature, the great Mahometan heresy stood out as the champion of Transcendentalism. In the enervating climate of the East, conducive to introverted reflection, Buddhism and much of the religion from which it sprang carried philosophy to the other extreme: the Immanent God its object of belief, the unreality of matter its watchword, Nirvana its goal. The religion which sprang from Palestine, the meeting-place of Asia and Africa, claims to settle, in some way, the dispute of the rival schools, and to interpret God as both immanent in all his works, and yet transcendent, infinitely above and beyond and independent of them all. *Semper agens*, like the God of Mahomet, he is also *semper quietus*, like the Immanent God of the East. You may talk of him as Creation's secret force, or you may picture him, equally well, as sitting in Heaven adored by Angelic hosts:

> Above the cloud, beneath the sod,
> The unknown God, the unknown God.

The advocates of Absolutism, who claim, with Hegel, to prove the existence of God on a purely rational basis, by identifying him with that all-inclusive Spirit which is the ultimate explanation of all things, are at some pains, if they have pretensions to the title of orthodox theologians, to

repudiate the suggestion that they are mere Pantheists, insisting that their "Absolute" is really possessed of Personality, and that, however much they may explain evil in terms of good, they do not, by their doctrines, in any way tend to obliterate moral distinctions. The Absolute, somehow or other, is he, not it. Mr. Moberly's final article in "Foundations" begins with an assertion of Absolutism against Scepticism or Agnosticism, proceeds to a very candid consideration of the objections which may be urged, whether by fellow-idealists or fellow-theologians, against his assertion of the Personality of the Absolute, and concludes with an effort to refute these objections by an appeal to the higher types of spiritual experience. With the first part of his Essay Christians can have little quarrel; so far, that is, as he tends to assert, not to deny, traditional attributes of the Divine Being; though many will think he has dealt rather hardly with Descartes' explanation of God as a First Cause. For myself, I find it quite impossible to conceive this amorphous lump which we call the Universe either as having existed from all time, or as having brought itself into existence: I demand a Personality behind the scenes; and although I shall doubtless be told that such a view is out of date, pig-headed, and parochial, I must still plead for it what I conceive to be the only ultimate justification for the validity of any mental process, that it must be true because I cannot think otherwise.*

* The suggestion which Mr. Moberly seems to make, on page 459, that the intellectualist view of existence is a hypothesis which we can verify, is one which I have tried to refute in Chapter II of this book. The validity of thought is a thing which we must assume simply because we cannot get away from it.

But when we come to ask, whether Mr. Moberly has fully answered in the third section of his chapter the possible objections which he has conjured up in the second, we shall be more inclined to part company with him. I am afraid that I cannot exactly see what it is, in the long run, that he asks us to believe, but there are tendencies about his *Refutatio* which seem to me to open the way to very serious consequences, whether in the sphere of pure theology, or in that of devotion.

In this refutation, there seem to me to be three distinct points over which, in default of any further qualifications, I must persist in thinking that Mr. Moberly has left his scheme seriously out of harmony with anything that can legitimately be called orthodox theology.

(1) He seems to admit the imputation, that God is not, could not be, self-sufficient apart from Man. "It is sometimes suggested," he says at the foot of page 510, "that Creation, Incarnation, and Atonement spring from the will rather than the nature of God. If this means that there is anything arbitrary about them, and that if they had not been, God could still have been God, we must unhesitatingly reject the suggestion." I cannot say that this gives me a reassuring idea of the majesty of God. Believing, as I do, in the power of God to create things *ex nihilo*, I find no difficulty at all in reason about conceiving God as existing, in all the self-sufficiency of his triune nature, without so much as a solitary angel to chant his praises, without a solitary planet to serve him on its course. I know that there is a certain sentimental value in imagining that we are essential to God's being, or at any rate his happiness.

"The fact that God has need of us is ultimate to the religious consciousness." But a sentimental value is not always (we tend to forget it) a devotional value. There is a languor about Christian sentimentalism which, when it is faced with the rudiments of ascetical theology, feels as if it had been suddenly plunged into a cold bath. What I seem to have learnt in all the books of devotional theology I ever read, is precisely that God has not need of me. As the background of every act of humility I ever make, I reflect that I have no possible right to exist, whereas God exists in his own right; that neither I nor any other creature were made because we were necessary to God, but just in order that we might have the privilege of serving him. To say that we were created for God's glory, is a very different thing from saying that he could not have got on without us. And I would rather be a Pagan, suckled in a creed outworn, than worship a being so limited.

(2) I cannot feel that Mr. Moberly has really successfully explained his point, or justified his position, with regard to Personality in God and in Man. He seems to suggest, that all our ideas of personality as something exclusive of other personalities are an error; due to our latent materialism which makes us conceive everything in terms of space, our proprietary outlook, so different from that of the Indian fakir who has no earthly possessions, and so on. We do not pay sufficient attention to the higher types of experience, and namely, to the sensation felt by the mystics of being in some way actually united with God. Our desire for a transcendent God is thus prompted by a feeling that he must always be some-

thing outside of ourselves, which feeling ought to be replaced by a constant desire to become more and more one with God, and ultimately (I suppose, though it is not stated in so many words) to be absorbed in him. Whereas for myself I cannot help thinking of God as one Person, and myself as another, elevated by the mysterious privilege of Creation into a position in which I shall be, through all the dark vistas of eternity, something distinct (although, please God, not separated) from him.

I know that this position sounds arrogant and parochial. I know that it will be characterized as worthy of the spirit of Humpty-Dumpty, when, sitting on his obscurantist wall, he gave birth to the remark, "Impenetrability, that's what I say." But for all that I will assert that it is a profound shock, not to my devotional instincts so much as to anything that I understand of reason, to hear personality described as something not eternally distinct. I suppose I must be a realist. Mr. Moberly will accuse me of thinking of the soul in terms of substance, or in terms of space. But I do not plead guilty. It seems to me that if you have two things which are exactly alike both in outward appearance and in essential attributes; not merely so that no microscope could detect a difference in quality between the two, but so that there should be really no difference in quality at all between the two, those things are still two, and not one. And I would repudiate energetically the idea that I merely mean they are different in so far as they are separated in space. I would say exactly the same of two non-spatial things, such as souls. The difference is a numerical difference, one is one, and the other is

the other—I can conceive of no more ultimate distinction.

That is what I mean by two personalities being different, and I do not see that it is materialistic. Nor can I follow the objection which the Idealist seems to have to saying that Man "*has* virtues of which hostile powers would rob him, *has* vices which he had better get rid of, *has* an ego which is his very own, *has* a soul which he may sell—and so on through a veritable auctioneer's catalogue of man's effects." I cannot see the justice of asking, "Who is the owner of these job lots?" and concluding that "When you think you have got him, he turns out to be one of his own possessions" (Mr. Jacks, quoted in "Foundations," pp. 497–498). To say that man has an ego is perhaps rather to beg the question. But to say that he *has* qualities, *has* a character, *has* a temperament, although you cannot conceive his existing without some sort of qualities, or character, or temperament, seems to me no more difficult than to say that a stone has weight, has shape, has colour, although without having them it would clearly not be a stone. There is a something in which all these "possessions" enter into combination; and to say that that something is nothing, merely on the ground that you can only define it negatively, seems to me wholly unwarrantable.

I can conceive, therefore, a time, when by God's grace my sins will have been entirely done away, and the content of my will be the same as the content of his, and I shall share his divine knowledge, and yet he will be he, and I shall be I. My heart will beat in exact time with the pulsing of his Sacred Heart, and yet he will be he, and I shall be I. Nor is

this belief due to any desire not to have my personality absorbed, which might be called pride on my part, but to a definite rational conviction as to the nature of personality.

To correct my impressions, I shall be told to go to the mystics, or even to certain texts in Scripture. "Growth in excellence and in spiritual life consists largely in a losing of ψυχή, a getting away from impenetrable individuality." If this is merely an appeal to Scripture, I can content myself with replying that I take the phrase, "hating one's ψυχή," in the very natural sense in which the A.V. takes it, namely, "hating one's life," that is to say, being ready to mortify oneself, and if necessary undergo martyrdom. And it is in the same sense that I would take such a remarkable passage as S. Gregory's, "Et fortasse laboriosum non est homini relinquere sua, sed valde laboriosum est relinquere semetipsum. Minus quippe est, abnegare quod habet, valde autem multum est, abnegare quod est" (Hom. 32 in Evang.). The language of the Saints, when they are speaking of union with the divine Lover, is, I submit, not the language of careful theologians, but the language of human lovers; and, as I have tried to show in a previous chapter, that language points always to a unity in difference, a unity of purpose in a difference of personalities. "Nevertheless not I, but Christ liveth in me" loses half its point if we obscure the paradox of it, which consists in the fact that Christ and his Apostle are not numerically one, but two, united by the grace which flows from the greater into the less. "That they may be one, even as thou and I are one" is a phrase which can be pressed unduly, if we paraphrase "as"

by "as fully as" instead of "as truly as." And I confess that to me it is a little difficult to understand, how (1) Church authority is "the corporate witness of the Saints to their experience," (2) the experience of the Saints involves the ideal of absorption, and (3) Church authority pronounces the ideal of absorption unchristian. There never was a decree more salutary, than the decree which silenced Molinos and condemned Quietism.

(3) Devotionally, I resent the idea of a God who could not have done without me; intellectually, I resent the idea of a God who is not distinct from me; morally, I cannot feel very happy about the idea of evil as an element in good, by way of redemption. "*O felix culpa*," Mr. Moberly quotes on page 514, "*quae talem et tantum meruit habere Redemptorem.*" But *felix* means "happy" in the sense of "lucky," not "blessed." I know no reason for asserting that "it is the saint, in whom the experience of redemption is the centre of bliss, who is actually the least sinful of men," in any sense which suggests that sinfulness redeemed is a better thing than innocence which has never sinned, that Mary of Magdala is a higher type than Mary the Mother of God. I should say that according to the experience of any of the Saints (since Mr. Moberly is appealing to experience here) sin itself is a revolt, an anomaly, a thing altogether outside of and contradictory to the scheme of God's Creation. Only the possibility of sin is involved in the creation of finite beings; sin itself is the product of a personality, and a personality distinct from God.

I know that in some mysterious way God is in all his works, upholding all things by the word of his

power. I know that in some sense the faithful disciple is one with his Master. But whatever the paradoxes it involves, whatever the antinomies which call for a supra-rational synthesis, there is no orthodox theology which does not at the same time recognize the complete transcendence of God.

CHAPTER XII

JONES AT THE CROSS-ROADS

THIS has not been an attempt to form any estimate of the general value of "Foundations." I am conscious of having given a very cursory criticism of certain contributions, such as Mr. Moberly's on the Atonement and on the Absolute: of having referred only incidentally to others, notably Mr. Brook's on the Bible and the joint essay on the Interpretation of the Christ; and of having left one almost entirely unconsidered, that of Mr. Temple on the Church. In excuse for myself, I can only say that I did not promise a complete criticism, I only set out to draw attention to certain tendencies in modern theology, manifested as well in "Foundations" as elsewhere, and to examine them with special reference to the way in which they affected "Foundations" itself. And I hasten to add, that although I must not be taken to agree with every point in the book which I have not criticized, I am very sensible of the great merits and the positive value of much that the book contains.

But there are two probable criticisms, of which I now feel the force very acutely. "You promised us that we were to have a psychological treatment, that we were to pry into the inmost soul of the modernizing theologian; and behold! you have given us nothing but pages of arid dogmatic controversy,

in which the contributors to 'Foundations' were set up as so many puppets for your random missiles." That looks true, I am afraid, on the face of it.

And the other criticism is even more severe. "After all, you have not argued with your opponents. You have only summed up their positions, shown that they led into what you considered to be error, flung at them, defiantly, a few cast-iron formulas culled from the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion and the Canons of the Council of Trent, and then asked your reader to choose between them. There has been no orthodox apologetic, except on a few minor points connected with the Person of our Saviour. You have put statement against statement; where is the use of it? Is your conclusion to be simply, 'You, Socrates, think this way, and I that,' or, in the less humble phrase of the fabled Scot, 'I ha'e my opeenions, and you ha'e your preejudices'? And again, haven't you talked a good deal too much about yourself? Isn't egoism rather discountenanced by modern standards of authorship? The capital 'I' on your typewriter must be almost worn through. We wanted less of your personal impressions, and more solid argument."

I am only consoled by the thought, that the two criticisms completely answer one another. It is precisely because the differences between the authoritarian and the modernist are so largely differences of psychology, of temperament, that I have not attempted (or, the present writer has not attempted, if you prefer it that way) to argue by any dialectical process which conclusions ought to hold the field. The difference of outlook, of starting-point, explained in Chapter II, is so radical, so far-reaching,

that there is really no question of compromise between the two, no possibility of blending them into a theology, half traditional, half modern, which will satisfy all parties. The difference is a difference of method, and the method inevitably determines the result.

And yet that difference of method springs, in the last resort, from a difference of temperament. Utilitarianism is based on a principle, the principle of Utility; Monophysitism is based on a dogma, the dogma of a single Nature; but Modernism, like Latitudinarianism, is based on a tendency, the tendency to be up to date. It is an affection of the soul.

Mr. Brook urges us to approach the Bible as if it were any other book, without presuppositions drawn from the musty traditions of antiquity; to embrace hypotheses, and follow the historic method—because the historic method is up to date. Mr. Streeter disapproves of miracles, as something careless and untidy, because "efficiency" is up to date. He also handles the Gospel narratives as if they were merely a biographical source, because the casting of doubt on biographical sources is up to date. Mr. Temple interprets the Incarnation in terms of Will, because, since Bergson, the philosophy of will is up to date. Mr. Rawlinson evaluates the experience of the Saints by the method of psychology, because the method of psychology is up to date. Mr. Moberly interprets the Atonement in humanitarian terms, because humanitarianism is up to date. And he states Theism in terms of Absolutism, because, though not quite up to date, Absolutism is the latest philosophy which has had anything to say to Christianity, as a system superior to others.

When I say "because," I do not mean that they all sat round a table and said, "Let's see, how can we be modern?" The tendency goes back very much further than that. It is bred in the bone, and involves an entire specializing of outlook. It is observable, often, in politics and social sympathies, as well as in religion. My only contention is, that in religion it is definitely out of place, because we are only the trustees of tradition; and whereas our spiritual talents have been given us to be multiplied, there are strong reasons for thinking that it will be safest to produce at the Last Day the deposit of Faith in its original currency, with no danger of diminution.

If I were sixty, I would add a pious hope, that as years went on the authors of "Foundations" would come to see there was more in traditional interpretations and in ecclesiastical prepossessions than their youthful views had allowed for. Fortunately, I am debarred from these grey-beard tactics. But I am strongly inclined to think, that, whether or no it happens in their, or in my lifetime, there will be a reaction in full flood against "Modern" methods of interpretation, in proportion as it is more clearly seen to what goal such methods are leading us. The Enlightenment of the Nineteenth Century has not yet spent its force; but, if I am not mistaken, there will be a reckoning. There will be a common-sense reaction, which will immolate the Synoptic problem upon the embers of the Homeric problem, and an intellectualist reaction, which will bury the appeal to mystical experience under the ruins of Psychical Research.

And meanwhile, what of Jones? I have called

this chapter "Jones at the Cross-roads," because (dare I confess it?) it is up to date. George Tyrrell put Christianity at the Cross-roads, and Father Figgis has put Civilization at the Cross-roads, and a hundred articles in a hundred weekly reviews have added to the crowd in attendance there; the Conservative party is at the Cross-roads almost every other week. But the people who use the metaphor seem all to have overlooked one very obvious thing; and that is that in the vast majority of Cross-roads there are not two choices open to you, but three. I do not know any reason why the Cross-roads should always form a T; why not a + instead? You need not turn either to the right hand or to the left; you can go straight on. I have no doubt that anyone who has observed the phrase, "Jones at the Cross-roads," has imagined that I meant he was in a position where only two choices were open to him, one being a sort of intellectual hari-kari such as the present writer is frequently accused of having committed, and the other the slippery path of modernism, ending in Heaven knows what abyss of heresy. I meant nothing of the kind. I meant that Jones was brought up to regard certain first principles as true; that for forty years he has been standing at a point in the road where modernism opens out on one side, and, if you like, complete intellectual suicide on the other. He is looking nervously down each of these in turn; the one thing that never seems to occur to him is the thing which I want him to do, and that is to go straight on. Let him trust orthodox tradition to determine what he is to believe, *and common sense to determine what is orthodox tradition.* It is true, he needs to be

more active intellectually, he needs to see how much his Christian profession involves, and what it commits him to. But the religion for him, so far at any rate as speculative theology goes, is precisely what he was taught in the nursery.

I admit, that he probably needs to know a lot more about the Church, her history, and her claims ; the Sacraments and other means of grace, the condition of the faithful departed, and so on. But he can learn all this for himself if he will only follow the road his headlights point to, the two headlights of Scripture and Tradition.

Perhaps, we must admit it reluctantly, Jones is too old for the treatment. Victorian conventions have eaten into his soul ; he could no sooner give up doubting, than reading *The Times* newspaper. But his sons or his grandsons will find out the straight path : straight, because it is the simplest way of accomplishing your journey ; straight, because the whole business of faith is not picking and choosing your way, or looking out for sign-posts, but having the pertinacity to follow your nose ; straight, because after all the road is very largely Roman. In our country, the country of compromises, the roads will dodge in and out, skirting respectfully the domain of some territorial magnate, softening down hills by gentle windings, and wandering a mile or two out of their course before they pluck up courage to cross a river. It is picturesque, certainly ; doubt is always picturesque ; but the straight, logical, business-like road of the Continent is the true type of all our pilgrimage.

For the clergy, who are so exercised about the case of Jones, let me add one word in conclusion.

More dogma is wanted, pulpitfuls of it. The reason why you do not give it him, is not that you are afraid of offending him, for if you are honestly convinced you must certainly be prepared to take the risk of that ; nor is it even because you are not intellectually convinced of your doctrines ; for, in the vast majority of cases, you are convinced, even where you are not well instructed. Your failure is a failure of imagination ; you believe the doctrine, but you do not realize it. And the way to get over that, is not to read more and more handbooks about dogma, in which the latest honorary canon triumphs over the latest German critic ; but to exercise your imagination in the only way in which the imagination can be exercised, by mental prayer. Faith is a gift, of whose origins we are ignorant, of whose function we can but form a dim idea ; but it is a force in you, like the muscles of your body, and must be cultivated, like the muscles of your body, not by speculating about the faculty, but by calling it into play. In meditation, the intellectual part of the exercise must not be skimped or contracted, you must not be in a hurry to rush off into the more facile play of the emotions, but rather fix your mind clearly on the great central truth upon which you are meditating, with all its apparent contradictions, its uncongenial implications, its brutal directness, and dare to say : " O my God, I believe this, because thou hast taught it me."

To S. Paul, the faithful are grown-up men, but only because he is contrasting the glorious liberty of the sons of God with the position of the unconverted Jew, still under the tutelage of the Law. As we stand in God's sight, we are only children still. As

children, we have a right to ask our Mother for definite information (and she gives it us), but not for explanations; it is not that we must not, it is simply that we cannot, understand. All that is expected of us, the wisest as well as the simplest, is to keep fast that which is committed to us. The moral issue is the only issue—if we do not cramp the conception of morals so as to make it include less than the whole culture of the interior life. The world, especially the modern world, is ever perplexing us with cross-currents, seeking to distract our attention this way and that in the abused name of self-realization. "There is need in the kingdom of heaven," says Mr. Moberly ("Foundations," p. 502), "for a Goethe as well as a S. Francis." Perhaps, but if so, Goethe must enter on the same terms as any other: "they that have done good shall go into life everlasting." Æsthetic values, intellectual values, patriotic values—all these have their part on the world's stage; but they are only supers; their rôle is only to make sham conversation in the background. The celestial limelight is thrown full on man's interior life; only the contemplation of this thrills the Angelic court with expectation. If Art, and Science, and Nationality, and all else that the world treasures, were drowned in the depths of the sea, the ultimate value of life would remain unaffected. Of which it has been said, Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of Man.

And so I commend this book to the charity of all who read it, and its author to their prayers.

NOTE

ON THE RISEN BODY OF OUR SAVIOUR

IT has been pointed out to me that in the fourth chapter of this book, in suggesting that our Lord's body after his Resurrection had undergone no change, any more than Lazarus' after his resurrection, I have deserted the authority of those schoolmen (S. Thomas, for instance) who held that it was a glorified body, though the glory was veiled at the time of his appearance. I confess that I had directed my attention more to S. Thomas Didymus than to S. Thomas Aquinas, being concerned merely to point out that there is no a posteriori evidence in the Gospels themselves which conclusively proves that the body which rose from the Tomb differed in any way from the body which hung upon the Cross.

I have no wish to desert Catholic tradition; so I will confine myself here to a single consideration; namely, that although Mr. Streeter agrees with S. Thomas as to the mode of the Risen Christ's existence, he quite certainly does not agree with him as to the consistency of the body. The glorified body, as conceived by S. Thomas, includes within itself the physical particles which went to make up the terrestrial body, to such an extent that the glorified body is a thing palpable. Therefore, if the Apostle had accepted the invitation to put his hand into the print of the nails, the hand would, according to S. Thomas, have encountered a physical resistance; would Mr. Streeter admit that? And the physical particles would, according to S. Thomas, have been no longer

in the Tomb; Mr. Streeter clearly thinks they would have remained there, but for the interference of Pilate. Both theologians assert that the Risen Body was a glorified body; but they do not mean the same thing when they use the same term.

My own contention is, that the Risen Body, whether glorified or not, was (on the explicit evidence of the Evangelists) capable of eating, and (on the implicit evidence of our Saviour himself) capable of offering resistance to the touch; negatively, it is certain from the Gospel narrative that the Resurrection involved the emptiness of the Tomb. And on a priori grounds I should maintain, positively, that whatever view we take of Montrose's assertion—

> Go, nail my head to yonder tower,
> Give every town a limb;
> The God who made will gather them,

we should at least have expected that a sinless body would not be allowed to see corruption; and negatively, that if the Risen Body were not palpable, it would not have provided any more evidence of immortality than that afforded by ghosts—which I take to be nil. As to the Ascension, I do not pretend to know whether a celestial body has weight, resistance, etc.; I do not know that Heaven was heavier after the Ascension, but I do know that earth was lighter.

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